

THOROUGH ELUCIDATION OF THE INTENT
AN EXTENSIVE EXPOSITION OF “ENTERING THE MIDDLE WAY”

Tsongkhapa

PART I: FIRST GROUND

Homage

With deep respect, I pay homage at the feet of and go for refuge to the gentle lord
Mañjuśrī and the Noble father [Nāgārjuna] and his sons.

The treasury of all well-uttered insights of the profound and the vast,
You are the unacquainted friend to the entire world;
You are the eyes revealing the excellent path to the beings of the three worlds -
Sovereign Sage, Sun of Speech, pray nurture us throughout all times.

Unrivalled amongst the retinue of myriad conquerors
In proclaiming everywhere the lion's roar
Of the perfect and excellent news of profound truth -
Guru Mañjuśrī, bless us throughout all times.

The distilled essence of the mind of the Sugathas of all three times,
The middle way free of extremes that is the path of dependent origination,
Nāgārjuna, you have been prophesized to expound this as it is -
I bow to you from my heart, pray seize me with your compassion hook.

Having traversed high on the basis of his instructions,
You have gained mastery over the news revealing the excellent path
That elucidates to the beings what you have seen by yourself –
Glorious Noble □Āryadeva, I bow down at your feet.

Fulfilling the sacred words of the gentle lord Mañjuśrī,
You illuminate the ultimate intent of Noble [Nāgārjuna],
You have traveled to the state of a perfected knowledge-holder –
Buddhapalita, I pay homage at your feet with my head.

The path of the great Sage subtle and difficult to comprehend,
The uncommon points of the tradition of Nāgārjuna,
You reveal these in their perfect fullness –
Candrakīrti, Śāntideva and so on, I bow at your feet.

The established tenets of Nāgārjuna and □Āryadeva,
That which has been unraveled by the three great charioteers,¹
All these unique points in their perfect completeness
Having seen these through the eyes of untainted intelligence,

¹ They are Buddhapalita (ca. fifth century CE), Candrakīrti (seventh century) and Śāntideva (eighth century), the three Indian Buddhist masters whom Tsongkhapa sees as the key proponents of the so-called Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka reading of Nāgārjuna's thought. The expression "great charioteer" (*shing rta chen po*) is an abbreviation of the full expression "great chariot-way maker" (*shing rta 'I srol 'byed chen po*), which evoke the notion of someone who opens a way for the chariots to pass through where previously there may have been either no path at all or, if any, only a small trail.

To help remove the stains of [erroneous] explanations of many
Who desire to expound this tradition in this part of the world,
And urged by others, I shall present here through pure explanation
An extensive exposition of *Entering the Middle Way*.

Preamble

[4] Here, the explanation of *Entering the Middle Way*, the great treatise that presents without error the twofold points of the profound and the vast [aspects of the path], in accord with its commentary,² has four parts:

- I. The meaning of the title
- II. Translator's homage
- III. The meaning of the treatise itself
- IV. The concluding matter.

I. The meaning of the title

In Sanskrit, which is one of the four great languages that existed in India, the title of this treatise is *Madhyamakāvatāranāma*. When translated into Tibetan, it is entitled *dbu ma la 'jug pa* (*Entering the Middle Way*). Here, the middle way that is being entered into is, as it is stated “to enter the middle way treatise,”³ the treatise on the middle way. This, in turn, should be taken to mean the *Fundamental Wisdom*. For instance, when the *Fundamental Wisdom* is cited as an authority in the commentary of this text, on many occasions, Candrakīrti writes “in *The Middle Way*.” Therefore the term should not be taken to refer to some other treatise on the middle way or some other meaning of the middle way. In the *Lamp of Wisdom* too, drawing on the etymology of the roots of the word middle way, there is an explanation that both a treatise on the middle way as well as the philosophy of the middle way can be referred to as “the middle way.”⁴ So, although only the word “middle way” appears [here in the title], it must be understood as referring to the treatise on the Middle Way.

What, then, is the mode by which this treatise enters the *Fundamental Wisdom*?

Here, some assert that in that [Nāgārjuna's] treatise the natures of the conventional and the ultimate truths have not been expounded extensively; here, in contrast, these have been presented extensively, so this text enters into that treatise. Now, with respect to the varieties of reasoning for establishing suchness, the *Fundamental Wisdom* is far more extensive than *Entering [the Middle Way]*. So I do not see this explanation to be a good one. As for our own position, there are two modes by which this work enters the *Fundamental Wisdom* – they are entering in terms of the profound aspect [of the path] and in terms of the vast aspect. In relation to the first of these, the auto-commentary states:

² “Commentary” here refers to the auto-commentary (*rang 'grel*), which is Candrakīrti's own commentary on the verses of his *Entering the Middle Way*. The significance of

³ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, 'a, 220a:1. “The treatise on the middle way” refers to Nāgārjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakārika* (*Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*) for which Candrakīrti sees his own work to be a kind of a primer or a guide. Hence, the title “*Entering the Middle Way*.”

⁴ *Prajñāḍīpa*, Toh 5853, Tengyur, dbu ma, tsa, 230b:4.

“This tradition is unique,” so must the learned ones ascertain.⁵

and:

Not realizing this, they abandon this profound teaching. Thus to present without error the truth of the [great] treatise, I have composed this work *Entering the Middle Way*.⁶

Thus, in order to demonstrate that the meaning of the *Middle Way* as established by him is distinctive compared to other middle way proponents, and to strengthen the conviction that the meaning of the treatise cannot be explained in conformity to the consciousness only [standpoint], Candrakīrti states that he composed this *Entering the Middle way*. [5] In his *Clear Words*, Candrakīrti says that insofar as the mode of dependent designation concerned this should be understood from his *Entering the Middle Way*,⁷ furthermore, the refutation of the Consciousness Only system is not extensive both in *Fundamental Wisdom* and *Clear Words*, but it is elaborate here. Therefore, to ascertain excellently the meaning of *Fundamental Wisdom* on the basis of this treatise by means of [understanding] these two objectives constitute one of the modes by which this text enters the *Middle Way*.

Entering the *Middle Way* in terms of the vast aspect [of the path] is as follows. According to the tradition of Noble [Nāgārjuna] the abiding in the two vehicles is not determined on the basis of whether or not there is the presence of the gnosis realizing the utterly profound truth of suchness. Furthermore, although in the *Fundamental Wisdom*, other than the class of the profound [emptiness] no distinctive characteristics of the vast aspect of the Mahāyāna are presented, within the twin vehicles of Mahāyāna and Lesser vehicle, this work was composed from the Mahāyāna perspective. This is because the extensive presentation of the no-self of phenomena by means of limitless varieties of reasoning is done so only in the context of the trainees of the Great Vehicle; and in the *Fundamental Wisdom* too, this is how the presentation is made. This point is stated very clearly in the following in the auto-commentary: [4]

Since [*Fundamental Wisdom*] elucidates the no-self of phenomena that it presents the Great Vehicle is certainly correct. For the intention here is to speak of it being presented extensively. In the Disciple’s vehicle the [presentation of] no-self of phenomena is confined only to summary, mere illustrations.⁸

I shall explore this point later.

Thus, if the path presented in that text [*Fundamental Wisdom*] is supplemented with other aspects of the Mahāyāna path on the basis of the instructions of Noble [Nāgārjuna], this would be most excellent. So to supplement these, [Candrakīrti] presented the three factors of the ground of the ordinary being, the ten grounds of the

⁵ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, 347b:1.

⁶ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, 347b:1.

⁷ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, 23a:6.

⁸ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, 228b:1

Noble [bodhisattvas] on the learner's stage, the resultant ground, and through [explaining] the sequence of the fifth and the sixth grounds, the cultivation of penetrative insight probing into the suchness of the two selflessness with the discriminative wisdom on the basis of tranquil abiding, which is the nature of concentration. Therefore, when contemplating the meaning of *Fundamental Wisdom*, if one fails to do this by bringing to one's mind these [points] presented in *Entering the Middle Way*, for such a person the two objectives of composing *Entering the Middle Way* will then have been lost. So, to enter the path of *Fundamental Wisdom* in terms of the vast aspect [of the path] on the basis of this text, then, is the second mode of entering the *Middle Way*. [6]

II. Translator's homage

I pay homage to the gentle lord Mañjuśrī

The meaning of the words [of this homage] is easy to understand. Given that this text presents the sublime higher knowledge and that the training in wisdom is its primary [subject matter], so paying homage to Mañjuśrī is to be in accord with a decree proclaimed in the past.⁹

III. The meaning of the treatise itself

This has four sections:

- A. Salutation as a means of entering into the task of composing the treatise
- B. The [outline] of the actual body of the treatise
- C. The manner in which the treatise was composed
- D. Dedicating the virtues of having composed the treatise

The first is twofold:

- 1. Praising great compassion without distinguishing the individual aspects
- 2. Paying homage to great compassion by distinguishing the individual aspects

1. Praising great compassion without distinguishing the individual aspects

**The disciples and medium buddhas arise from the excellent sages;
The excellent sages are born from the bodhisattvas;
The compassionate mind and the non-dual awareness,
As well the awakening mind – these are the causes of the bodhisattva. 1**

⁹ This is an allusion to a royal decree proclaimed during the eighth century whereby, to help immediately identify which class of the three baskets – discipline (*vinaya*), discourses (*sutra*), and higher knowledge (*abhidharma*) – a given text may belong to different objects for paying homage were to be chosen by the translators. According to this, in the case of a discipline text the translator must pay homage to the Omniscient One, in the case of a text on discourses basket, to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and finally, in the case of a higher knowledge basket text, homage must be paid to Mañjuśrī.

Candrakīrti, the person who intends to compose *Entering the Middle Way* for the purpose of entering the middle way treatise, not only did he not take the disciple and self-enlightened ones who are chosen as objects of salutation in other texts, even with respect to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, to demonstrate that it is the great compassion – the first perfect cause of buddhahood, which is characterized by total rescuing of all sentient beings bereft of refuge and caught in the prison of cyclic existence, the principal cause that is given the name of its fruit, the Blessed Lady – that is worthy of praise, he wrote the [above] two stanzas beginning with the line “The disciples and ...”¹⁰

This has two sections:

- a. Demonstrating compassion to be the principal cause of a bodhisattva
- b. Demonstrating it to be root of the two other causes of a bodhisattva as well.

The first one has three parts:

- i. How disciples and self-enlightened ones are born from the sovereign sage
- ii. How the buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas
- iii. Presenting the three principal causes of the bodhisattva

i. How disciples and self-enlightened ones are born from the sovereign sage

[7] Having listened to the perfect instructions from others when they attain as the fruit of their meditation the Disciple’s enlightenment, they then enable others to hear that truth; so they are called the “hearers.” The manner in which they enable others to hear [the truth] is as found repeatedly in the scriptures, such as, “Thus I have completed my task. Other than this, I will know of no other existence”¹¹ and so on.

Although this etymological explanation does not apply to some disciples, such as those in the formless realm, this is not a problem. There are cases where, in order for the term to be applied as an actual name it is not necessary for there to be the reason that explains the etymological meaning. The term “lake-born” is, for example, applicable as an actual name for a lotus that is born in the dry. Alternatively, the etymology of the disciple’s Sanskrit term *Śravaka* can be taken to mean “those who proclaim what is heard.” On this explanation, the disciples are so-called because, having heard of the path to travel to buddhahood, the highest fruit, from the buddhas, they proclaim it to those who are inclined towards the Great Vehicle and seek that path. The *Sublime Dharma White Lotus* states:

Lord, today we have become the disciples!
We shall proclaim perfectly the sublime awakening;
We shall utter thoroughly as well the sound of awakening;
We resemble therefore the formidable disciples!¹²

¹⁰ *Madhyamakāvatāra*, 1:1. This is the first verse of the salutation stanza of Candrakīrti’s *Entering the Middle Way*.

¹¹ See, for example, Toh 1, ‘dul ba kha, *Vinayavastu*, 36b:7.

¹² *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*; Toh 113, mdo sde ja, chapter 4, 46a:4

For the bodhisattvas, these two reasons constitute the ground for their resemblance to the disciples; for the disciples, however, the meaning of the name “he who proclaims what is heard” applies in actuality. Some, asserting that because the third line [in this quote] lacks the explicit usage of the word “sublime,” the first *awakening* refers to that of the Great Vehicle while the latter refers to the awakening of the disciples. However, the understanding of the auto-commentary is that the first refers to the awakening of the Great Vehicle and the second occurrence to the path that leads to that awakening. Now, one might wonder, “Given that the bodhisattvas too hear the path to buddhahood from the buddhas and proclaim it to the trainees, do they too become *śravaka* disciples?” This, however, is not a problem. The disciples only proclaim the path [of the Great Vehicle], but do not practice it themselves, not even a similitude. This is the intended meaning [of the name].

With respect to the term “buddha” being referred in the “medium buddha,” some explain this on the basis of the auto-commentary’s statement, “The suchness of the buddha applies to all three persons,”¹³ in terms of the interpretation that the term *tatvabuddha* (buddha’s suchness) applies to all three persons. This is excellent. As one reads, “*Tatva* means ‘suchness,’ the *buddha* means ‘to realize within,’” so when realization of suchness is taken to be the meaning of the term “buddha,” all three persons possess this meaning. Thus, although the intention here [in the text] is to say that the term “realizer of suchness” indicates the self-enlightened ones too, the term has been translated simply as “the buddha.” [8] In general, although the term buddha can be translated as the Fully Awakened One, here to do so is inappropriate. In any case, since it is said that the term “buddha” can refer to the blossoming of lotus petals as well as waking up from sleep, it is not necessary always to translate the term as the Fully Awakened One.

The meaning of the word “medium” is this. The self-enlightened ones are, because of their characteristic enhancement of the cultivation of merit and wisdom over a hundred eons, superior to the disciples; because they lack the dual collections of merit and wisdom, the great compassion that extends to all sentient beings at all times, and the omniscient knowledge of all aspects of phenomena, compared to the buddhas, they are inferior. Hence they are [on] the medium level.

Some say that the meaning of their being superior to the disciples is as stated in the line “Because they have overcome conceptualization of objects...”¹⁴ This is incorrect. This is because, in this tradition [of Candrakīrti], it has been stated that both the disciples and self-enlightened ones possess the realization of all phenomena as being devoid of intrinsic existence. Furthermore, the one asserts in the above manner seems accept this very tenet as well!¹⁵ Therefore, in the auto-commentary [the self-enlightened ones] are described as being superior in terms of their enhanced wisdom. “Enhancement” here refers to their ever-enhancing refinement in their progress on the path. It is for one

¹³ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 221a:5

¹⁴ Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma ra, 7b:3. Here, Jayānanda is citing *Abhisamayālakāra*, 2:8, which presents key characteristics of the path of the self-enlightened ones.

¹⁵ The point Tsongkhapa is making here is that Jayānanda himself, who explains the self-enlightened ones as being middle level on the basis of the above cited stanza from *Abhisamayālakāra*, being a follower of Candrakīrti, upholds the tenet that both the disciples as well the self-enlightened ones possess the wisdom realizing the emptiness of intrinsic existence of all phenomena.

hundred eons they immerse themselves in the habituation of merit and wisdom; they are not like the disciples who are incapable of sustaining habituation to the path [for long periods of time].

Although the term “collection” may apply to merit and wisdom in general, the primary referent of the term “collection” is as stated in the following in the *Clear Meaning Commentary*:

As it upholds the great awakening by means of accomplishing the perfect [truth], great compassion and so on constitute the collection.¹⁶

The term [collection] is applied here to that which upholds the fruits through the unerroneous means of cultivating the unsurpassed awakening, so it refers to the merit and wisdom that embodies this meaning. Those that do not possess such meaning are ordinary collections. This meaning is derived from the explanation of the etymology of the term *sambhara*, which is the Sanskrit equivalent for the word “collection.”

Now, because of the stride of their merit and wisdom, even in the desire realm, during their last existence, the self-enlightened ones are capable of generating the *arhat*’s gnosis without dependence on being taught by other masters. [9] It is for their own sake too they become awakened, that is to attain the *arhat*’s state or strive to do attain so. Thus they are called the self-enlightened ones or referred to also as the self-arisen ones.

Although the term “sage” can be applied to the disciples and self-enlightened *arhats*, since they are not sovereign sages, the buddhas alone are referred to as the sovereign sages. This is because the buddhas have obtained the most sublime accomplishment of the Dharma that excels the disciples, the self-enlightened ones and the *bodhisattvas*, and it is on the basis of the buddha’s sacred words that the three persons reign over the kingdom of the Dharma. It is from these sovereign sages that the disciples and the self-enlightened ones are born, so they are produced by the buddhas.

“In what way do the sovereign sages produce the disciples and the self-enlightened ones?” Now, when a buddha appears in the world he engages in teaching the profound dependent origination without distortion; this the disciples and the self-enlightened ones will listen to, reflect upon the meaning of what is heard, and meditate on the meaning of what is reflected upon. It is through such a process that the disciples and the self-enlightened ones will fulfill their wishes in accordance with whatever fruits they may aspire for. These two are, therefore, produced by the sovereign sage.

One might wonder: “Many of those who belong to the disciple’s class may actualize enlightenment in the very life in which they have heard teachings from the Buddha. Nonetheless those who belong to the self-enlightened one’s class do not actualize enlightenment in that very lifetime, so it is not true that they fulfill their wish on the basis of engaging in the study, reflection and meditation on what has been taught by a buddha.” This is not a problem. It is possible that some who belong to the class of the self-enlightened ones may, having listened to the Teacher’s revelation of dependent origination alone, gain expertise in the realization of the ultimate truth but do not attain the self-enlightened one’s *nirvāṇa* in that very life wherein they have heard the teaching. Although the seeker of the self-enlightened state to whom a buddha had revealed

¹⁶ Haribhadra, *Abhisamayālakāra-prajñāparamitopadeśaśāstravṛtti*; Toh 3793, Tengyur, shes phyin ja, *

dependent origination does not attain *nirvaṇa* in that very life, he will definitely attain it in some other life. This is analogous to the example where someone who has accrued a definite karma does not undergo the fruit [of that karma] in the same life wherein he has accrued it but he will definitely experience it in some other life. So the earlier statement that it is on the basis of engaging in study, reflection and meditation that they will fulfill their wishes was not made with the view of one lifetime alone. The *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

He who knows suchness, even if [10]
He does not attain *nirvaṇa* in this life,
In other lives he'll, without effort,
Definitely attain it, just like karma.¹⁷

The [*Fundamental Wisdom of the*] *Middle Way* too states:

When the fully awakened ones do not appear,
And when the disciples are no more,
The gnosis of the self-enlightened ones
Spontaneously arise without dependence.¹⁸

With regard to the meaning of the statement “If, some say...” found in the commentary,¹⁹ some assert that this presents the response to the query, “Given that there appear to be cases where although dependent origination has been taught some do not attain the states of disciples and self-enlightened ones. So through the teaching of dependent origination the disciples and the self-enlightened ones are not accomplished.”²⁰ Others explain that this presents the response to the following query: “The fruits [of *nirvaṇa*] should come about the moment they implement into practice the truth of the unborn [nature of] dependent origination. Since this is not the case this means that in future too [the buddha’s teaching] will not produce that fruit.”²¹ These are explanations borne of a failure to understand the proper context. It is in relation to the question of how the sovereign sages produce the self-enlightened ones that there arises greater doubt. And it is this doubt that needs to be addressed with special emphasis, which these [commentators] have failed to do.

ii. *How the buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas*

Now, if the disciples and the self-enlightened ones are born from the sovereign sages, from who do those sovereign sages come into being? The fully awakened buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas. One might object: “Are not the bodhisattvas called ‘conqueror’s children’ because they too come into being on the basis of what is taught by the buddhas? Since they are conqueror’s children how can it be that the buddhas are born

¹⁷ Āryadeva, *Catuhśastakakārikā*, 8:22; Toh 3846, dbu ma *tsha*, 10a:2.

¹⁸ Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 18:12; Toh 3824, Tengyur, dbu ma *tsa*, 11a:5.

¹⁹ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 220a:6.

²⁰ This is the reading found in Jayānanda’s *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*. See Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma *ra*, *.

²¹ This is most probably a reading of an earlier Tibetan commentator, the identity of which remains unclear.

from the bodhisattvas? For example, it cannot be the case that the father of the son is born to that son.”

It is true that the bodhisattvas are children of some of the conquerors; nonetheless it is on two grounds that the bodhisattvas serve as cause of the buddhas. The way in which how the bodhisattvas serve as a cause of the buddhas in terms of their states is this: [11] *The state of the Tathagata is the fruit of the state of the bodhisattva*. This entails that all those who have attained the state of buddhahood did so on the basis of having attained the state of the bodhisattva in the past while on the learner’s path. So, it is through being a substantial cause, that is bearing the continuity of a shared personal continuum with the buddha, that the bodhisattva is shown here to be the cause of the buddha. The way in which how the bodhisattva serves as the cause of the buddha through enabling him to uphold the perfect truth is this. [For example] one reads in the sutras how Mañjuśrī, a bodhisattva, made our Teacher and other buddhas to uphold the awakening mind at a very early stage in the beginning. This establishes how, on the basis of the bodhisattva serving as a cooperative condition of the buddhas that are of different personal continuum and who are the objects of attainment of other bodhisattvas, the buddha is born from the bodhisattva.

Here, the following thought might occur: “In response to the objection, ‘Since the bodhisattvas are conqueror’s children it is appropriate that the bodhisattvas are born from the conquerors. So one should not assert the contrary,’ when one replies, ‘It is true that the bodhisattvas are conqueror’s children,’ it has been shown that the author himself accept this to be true. Here one needed to demonstrate the reasons why, although one accepts [the bodhisattvas are children of conquerors] there is no contradiction with the fact that it is from the bodhisattva that the buddha is born. Instead, one establishes the point that it is from the bodhisattva that the buddha is born. This is inappropriate. For even if this is established, the doubt raised earlier still remains and this doubt cannot be resolved.”

This fault does not arise. The meaning of the root text’s presentation of the buddha being born from the bodhisattva is the following. In the context of the first reason, when it is explained that it is on the basis of undertaking the practice of the path that the bodhisattva on the learner’s stage attain as its fruit the buddhahood, one can understand that such a bodhisattva is not the child of the buddha he shall attain. So how can it be the case that [the root text] says “Though this is true” in relation to such [a buddha]. Furthermore, the bodhisattva who newly comes into being on the basis of our Teacher’s sacred words, though he is a child of that buddha, that buddha is not born from this bodhisattva. Therefore, this objection that trades upon not distinguishing between the two contexts has been responded to in the commentary. So if one possesses some intelligence, how is it that this is not understood? Be that as it may, numerous pointless explanations appeared to have arisen with respect to this. [12]

Because the bodhisattvas are the principal cause of the buddhas, for this reason alone, the buddhas laud the bodhisattvas. This is how one should relate [to the meaning of the text]. There are four grounds for this laudation: (1) It is because the perfect cause of buddhahood is most profound in that it is extremely precious; (2) because it is intended that, by offering salutation to the bodhisattva, who is the cause, one implicitly offers salutation to the resultant buddha as well; (3) just as in the case of a medicinal tree that

gives forth the desired fruits one sees its shoot, the trunk and so on, and one nurtures with special care when it is at the stage of a sapling with young tender leaves, what is being demonstrated is that one must nurture with great effort the bodhisattva on the beginner's stage, who is the shoot [that produces] the tree of the buddha, a spring-well of relief for all beings; (4) it is to help those who happen to be in the vicinity when laudations of the bodhisattva are being uttered and those who have been placed to the three vehicles to definitely connect them to the great vehicle itself. This is as stated in the following in the *Jewel Stacked Sūtra*:

Kāśyapa, it is thus. For instance, one pays homage to the new moon but not to the full moon. Likewise, Kāśyapa, those who thoroughly revere me should pay homage to the bodhisattvas but not so to the Tathagatas. Why is this so? It is from the bodhisattvas the Tathagatas arise, and from the Tathagatas all the disciples and the self-enlightened ones arise.²²

This establishes, by means of scriptural authority, that the buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas, while the two reasons cited above establish this by means of reasoning.

Therefore the reason why no salutation is offered to the disciples, self-enlightened ones, the buddhas and the bodhisattvas – who are renown as objects of salutation elsewhere – is to offer salutation to their root cause. And the presentation of the four persons in the two lines beginning with the line “The disciples ...,” in their sequence, as cause and effects [13] is done for the sake of identifying their final root cause. Therefore, although it is on the basis of what is taught by the buddha that the bodhisattvas come into being, in the context of the statement “the sovereign sages are born” it is not necessary to explain this exactly as [the birth of] the disciples and the self-enlightened ones. The significance of demonstrating how these two are born from the sovereign sage is to show how, when traced, even the root of these two terminate in compassion. That the root of bodhisattva culminates in compassion is presented separately.

iii. Presenting the three principal causes of the bodhisattvas

Now, if the disciples and the self-enlightened ones are born from the sovereign sages, and the sages are born from the bodhisattvas, what then are the causes of these bodhisattvas? The following three factors – the mind of compassion that will be presented later on, wisdom that is the awareness realizing the truth of the absence of or freedom from the duality of the two extremes of thingness, no-thingness and so on, and the awakening mind – are the primary causes of the bodhisattvas who are the children of the conquerors.

Here, the awakening mind is stated in the commentary to be the one as presented in the cited sūtra. In the sūtra itself, it states:

Having realized the suchness of one's own reality, the mind that has been generated with the thought “I shall help the sentient beings realize this ultimate reality,” this is I call the awakening mind.²³

²² *Kāśyapaparivarta* in *Ratnakūṭasūtra*; Toh 87, Kangyur, dkon brtsegs *cha*, chapter 37, 137a:1.

²³ *Dharmasaṃgītināmamahāyānasūtra*; Toh 238, Kangyur, mdo sde *zha*, 79b:2.

This focuses on only one aspect of the objective of the generated awakening mind and therefore does not complete its definition. Also, in the commentary, one reads, “One should definitely generate the mind with the thought ‘I shall rescue the entire world from suffering and definitely connect them to buddhahood.’”²⁴ Here too, because there is no focusing on the awakening [itself], which is the object of attainment, it presents only one part of the definition. Therefore, in the commentary, in the context of presenting how the awakening mind arises in dependence upon compassion, one reads:

The cause from which comes about the excellent taste of the ambrosia of sublime Dharma, which is characterized by the turning away of all false conceptualizations, that which possesses the nature of being a true friend to all beings, it is this buddhahood alone, one aspires to attain perfectly.²⁵ [14]

Thus it is explained extremely clearly that [this mind] focuses on the awakening, which is the object of attainment. We should, therefore, accept the following to be the complete definition of the generated awakening mind: “The wish to attain the unexcelled enlightenment – the object of attainment – for benefit of all sentient beings, who are its intended objective.” This is how one finds explained also in the *Explanation of the Commentary*, which is good.²⁶ So there is no difference between this tradition and what is stated in the *Ornament of Clear Realization*.²⁷

That these three factors are to be posited as the cause of the bodhisattvas is the tradition of the *Precious Garland*, as stated in the following:

One’s own self and the world at large,
If you wish to attain the unexcelled enlightenment,
The roots of this are the awakening mind,
As firm as Mt Meru, the king of mountains,
Compassion extending to all directions and limits,
And wisdom that does not tend toward duality.²⁸

Although this citation presents [these] to be the root of awakening and not explicitly of the bodhisattva explicitly, the word “root” has the meaning of being the first and, since the context here is the presentation of the three principal causes of that [beginner’s] stage, that these three are the principal cause of the bodhisattva can be understood from its context. Since the demonstration of the three factors as the cause of the bodhisattva is being done in the context of exploring the question of how, if the disciples and the self-enlightened ones are born from the buddhas and the buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas, from where do the bodhisattvas take birth, so their being the cause of the bodhisattvas cannot be in the sense of an explanatory cause; it is in the sense of the cause of production.

²⁴ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 222b:6.

²⁵ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 223b:6.

²⁶ This is a reference to Jayānanda’s *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*.

²⁷ This is the definition of the awakening mind presented in *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, 1:19. Toh 3786, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 2b:5.

²⁸ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavalī*, 2:73; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 113b:1.

Qualm: The bodhisattva for whose cause these three factors are cited, with respect to its lowest level, do you take this to be the bodhisattva who has entered the path or not at its first stage? If so, to posit the Mahāyāna awakening mind to his cause becomes untenable, for the moment this is attained it he is defined as being a bodhisattva. Positing the gnosis that does not tend towards the two extremes is also not tenable because the bodhisattvas first generate the conventional awakening mind and, following this, they engage in the practices of the six perfections. It is during such training in the wisdom that they train in the gnosis not tending towards the two extremes. If you do not take [it to include the initial stage bodhisattva], this contradicts the statements whereby he is described as a new-moon-like bodhisattva or a bodhisattva that resembles the shoots of a medicinal tree.

Because the exact faults you have leveled above will ensue, [15] we do not accept the second position, but subscribe to the first. Nonetheless, the fault you have cited earlier will not arise for us because the generation of the awakening mind prior to the bodhisattva [stage] is intended to be in the context of the meditative cultivation of the awakening mind; it does not refer to the actual generated mind that has arisen on the basis of such meditative cultivation. For example, there are the experiences of tasting the bark of the sugarcane and what is inside the bark. In the same manner, the mere thought “I shall attain buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings” is only an understanding that follows after the words and is analogous to the taste of the bark of sugarcane. Although it is called the generation of the mind, it is not the actual generated [awakening] mind. Now the arising of the extraordinary experience that has the capability to wonderfully bring about an effect in one’s mind, on the basis of training in accordance with the instructions of cultivating awakening mind, this is analogous to the taste of the actual sugarcane that resides inside the bark. It is, therefore, the genuine generated awakening mind. With this in mind, *Evoking the Altruistic Resolve* too states:

Just like the bark it is but a speech;
The taste-like is the real mind.²⁹

Given that the bodhisattvas of higher mental faculty first seek the view of suchness and then generate the awakening mind, the second fault too does arise. That this is so, I shall explain later.

The “non-dual awareness” here does not refer to the absence of the subject-object duality; this is explained in the commentary in terms of a wisdom that is free of the two extremes.³⁰ That this can come prior to being a bodhisattva, there is no contradiction. Those who interpret it as referring to the ultimate awakening mind is completely out of context; the usage of the expression “non-dual awareness” must indicate a wisdom that is the cause of the bodhisattva who has first entered the path.³¹

b. Demonstrating compassion to be root of the two other causes of the bodhisattva as well

²⁹ *Adhyāśāyasanñeodana* in *Ratnakūṭa*; Toh 87, Kangyur, dkon brtsegs ca, 146a:4.

³⁰ *MABh*, 222a:4.

³¹ This is a critique of Jayānanda’s reading.

Since compassion is, in turn, the root of the awakening mind and the non-dual awareness, so with the intention of demonstrating compassion to be the primary among these three [factors], the following stanza, beginning with the line “In that ...” has been stated: [16]

**In that compassion alone is accepted as the seed
Of this perfect conqueror harvest, as the water that nourishes it,
And as the ripened fruit that is the source of enjoyment for long,
So I shall, at the start of all, praise this compassion. 2**

For the reason that compassionate heart is crucially important in the beginning to produce the perfect fruit of the conquerors it resembles the seed; in the middle, to help enhance [the plant] to ever higher states, it is like the water; finally, as a source of enjoyment by the trainees for a long time, it is accepted as resembling the ripened fruits. Therefore, I, Candrakīrti, shall, in contrast to the disciples, the self-enlightened ones, the bodhisattvas, as well their two other causes, praise compassion at the start of composing this treatise.

With respect to this too, it is not the case that compassion will be praised sometime later on. Rather, this is done right here by demonstrating its crucial importance in the beginning, in the end as well as in the middle when it comes to producing the fruit of conqueror. The exclusive particle “alone” indicates that, unlike in the case of the analogy of external crop where what is crucially important in the beginning, at the end as well as in the middle, constitute distinct factors, in the context of the referent, compassion alone is shown to be crucially important for the crop of conqueror in the beginning, at the end, as well as in the middle.

The manner in which it is, like the seed, crucially important at the beginning is as follows. Because those who possess great compassion feel pained by the suffering of other sentient beings, so in order to help protect all suffering-ridden sentient beings, they will generate the mind directed towards their objective and contemplate, “I shall rescue all these sentient beings from suffering and definitely connect them to the buddhahood.” They will come to see this to be dependent upon their own attaining of buddhahood, thus they will generate the mind focused on awakening with the thought “I shall, by all means, attain buddhahood for the benefit of these beings.” Seeing that such a pledge cannot be fulfilled if one forsakes the [bodhisattva] deeds including the non-dual wisdom, generosity and so on, they will then definitely engage in the deeds, principally the [cultivation of] gnosis. Therefore, the root of all the enlightened qualities of the buddha is great compassion. With this understanding, the *Precious Garland* states:

In those [scriptures of] the Great Vehicle,
In which are taught all the deeds,
Preceded by compassion, and stainless wisdom,
What sane person would deride such [teachings]?³²

Here it presents how within the three deeds – (1) preceded by compassion, (2) the [bodhisattva] deeds in general that are brought forth by the awakening mind, (3) and, in particular, the deed of a wisdom that is free of the stain of objectification of the two extremes – all the points of the Great Vehicle are encompassed. [17]

³² *Ratnavālī*, 4:52; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 122b:4.

The manner in which it is, like water, crucially important in the middle is as follows. Even if the seed of compassion had produced the shoot of awakening mind at the beginning, if it is not repeatedly sustained through the water of compassion one will fail to gather the expansive dual collections, which are the cause of the fruition that is the buddhahood. Certainly this will result in the actualization of the nirvāṇa of either the disciple or that of the self-enlightened ones. However, if [the shoot awakening mind] is repeatedly sustained with the water of compassion, such a situation will not come about.

The manner in which it is, like the ripened fruit, crucially important at the end is as follows. Even if one attains the conqueror's state, if one is devoid of the ripened fruit of compassion, one will not become a resource for the enjoyment of the sentient beings; also the uninterrupted increase of the assemblies of Noble disciples, Noble self-enlightenment ones and Noble bodhisattvas – one following another in a continuing lineage – will fail to become reality. In contrast, if, on the level of the result, compassion is present continually, the contrary situation will occur.

Therefore, through unraveling the meaning of these four lines [of salutation verse], beginning with the words “In that ...,” you should come to the contemplation that “If I aspire to be a Mahayanist, first I must fall under the power of compassion, and, on the basis of this, I must generate the genuine awakening mind from the depth of my heart, and, having generated this mind, I must without doubt engage in the bodhisattva deeds in general and in particular penetrate the depth of the profound view [of emptiness].” In this way you must find a firm conviction that [these lines] indicate that need to train in these practices.

2. Paying homage to great compassion by distinguishing the individual aspects

This has two parts:

- a. Paying homage to the compassion that has sentient beings as its object
- b. Paying homage to the compassion that has the factors of existence as its object, and that has the absence of object as its object

a. Paying homage to the compassion that has sentient beings as its object

**First, with the thought “I,” the beings cling to a self;
Then, with the thought “mine,” they become attached to things;
Like a paddlewheel in motion they have no autonomy;
I bow to that compassion which cares for such beings. 3**

Since it is the egoistic view grasping at self that engenders the egoistic view grasping at “mine,” at first – that is prior to the egoistic view manifestly clinging to “mine” – the egoistic view grasping at “I” assumes the self, which does not exist by means of an intrinsic nature, to have intrinsic existence. So they manifestly cling to the referent of the thought “I am” itself, [18] as being substantially real. Following this, the egoistic view grasping at mine engenders attachment as substantially real to “mine” – that is factors other than the object of “I” grasping, such as one's body, the eyes, and so on. It does so

with the thought “this is mine.” So, just like a paddlewheel in motion or in rotation, the beings revolve in a cycle without autonomy. To such a compassion that attends to these transmigrating beings, I shall bow down. This is the meaning of paying homage to the compassion that attends to the sentient beings.

In what way do the beings resemble the perpetual motion of a paddlewheel? Here two things, the sentient beings and the perpetual motion of a paddlewheel, are the basis of comparison – the analogy and what resembles it. The points of resemblance are the following. Just as there are six characteristics to the analogy, such as being bound by a rope, the referent too possesses these characteristics. To illustrate these together, (1) the first characteristic is that this contained world [of sentient beings] is bound very tightly by the ropes of karma and afflictions. The pronoun “this” should be applied to the remaining five characteristics as well. (2) Just like the paddlewheel [depends on] the person who is turning it, this [world] operates in dependence on being propelled by consciousness. (3) This [world] rotates from the depths of the great well of cyclic existence, from the peak of existence to the relentless hells, with no interval at all. (4) This world travels downwards to the lower realms, naturally and with no dependence on exertion, while it needs to be drawn upwards to the higher realms with great effort. (5) Although there are the three afflicted classes – (i) the afflictions, which are ignorance, craving and appropriation, (ii) karma, which are volition and becoming, and (iii) the afflicted birth, namely the seven remaining links [in the chain of the twelve links of dependent origination] – as for their sequence of occurrence, no definite order can be set. (6) On a daily basis this world is assailed by the *suffering of suffering*, the *suffering of change*, and the *suffering of pervasive conditioning*. Therefore, this world of transmigrating beings possesses nothing but the condition of a perpetually moving paddlewheel.

Now, the significance of comparing [the two] on the basis of these six characteristics is not simply to engender an understanding of how the sentient beings wander in the cyclic existence. What is it then? Earlier, it has been revealed that those who aspire to enter the Great Vehicle must first generate great compassion. As to how compassion is to be generated on the basis of what kind of meditative cultivation, this was not explained. [19] So, by meditating on how the sentient beings wander in cyclic existence as described here, the method of how to generate great compassion being shown.

So what is the agent that makes the beings to revolve? It is this extremely untamed and undisciplined mind. In what place and in what manner do they revolve? In this place, from the peak of existence down to the relentless hells, they revolve with no interval at all of not being in motion. Because of what causes and conditions do they revolve? It is through karma and the afflictions. Here, due to the demeritorious karma and its [associated] afflictions they revolve in the lower realms; and due to the meritorious and unwavering karma they revolve in the higher realms. Of these, with respect to the first, they enter them without any need to strive to take birth there. As for the latter, since their causes need to be cultivated with great effort, it is harder [to take birth there]. This is as found stated in the *Foundational Discipline*, where it is taught that those who migrate from the higher realms and the lower realms and depart to the lower realms resemble the number of particles of dust that exist on this great earth, while those who migrate from

these two realms and depart to the higher realms resemble the particles of dust collected on the tip of a finger.³³

During the period of any of the three afflictions of a single cycle of [twelve links of] dependent origination, the two other afflicted factors pertaining to a different cycle of dependent origination can come to operate. So the continuity never ceases. Furthermore, every single day one is tormented by the three classes of suffering not just once but [continually] like the ripples of water. One contemplates these facts.

In this regard, now, if one does not experience any effect at all in his mind when he contemplates the manner in which he himself wanders in the cycle of existence in the first place, then on the beginner's stage, there is no way that such a person would experience a sense of unbearableness with regard to others' suffering when contemplating suffering on other sentient beings. Therefore, just as explained in the commentary to the *Four Hundred Stanzas*, one should first contemplate [suffering] upon one's own self.³⁴ Then meditate on other sentient beings.

One might wonder, "Does meditating upon the fact of other sentient beings being tormented in the cycle of existence through suffering and its origin alone bring forth great compassion? Or, does this require some other complementary factor?"

Now, when one sees suffering in one's enemy, not only is there no sense of unbearableness, but there is in its place a sense of joy. And when one sees someone who has done neither benefit nor harm suffer, most of the times, one tends to be oblivious to it. This happens because one lacks, on one's part, a sense of holding them as dear. With relation to one's kin, when one sees their suffering one is unable to bear this, and furthermore, the greater the depth of one's sense of holding them dear [20] the more intense one's feeling of unbearableness appears to be. So the need to generate a sense of endearment towards the sentient beings, valuing them dearly and cherishing them in one's heart, is the most essential point.

Now, with respect to the method of generating this sense of endearment there seems to be two traditions among the learned masters. Of these, the first is, as explained by Candrakīrti in his commentary on the *Four Hundred Stanzas*, where he explains how when one has contemplated all sentient beings to be one's kin, such as one's parents, since beginningless time, one will then have the forbearance to plunge into the cyclic existence to help free them.³⁵ This was taught also by the great being Candragomin as well as the learned Kamalaśīla as well.³⁶ The second approach is the tradition of glorious /antideva. This I have already explained elsewhere from where you could understand.³⁷

Thus those who strive in the training of great compassion on the basis of utterly cherishing the sentient beings in one's heart and [contemplate] the manner in which they are tormented in cyclic existence, they make Candrakīrti's unique offering of salutation serve its purpose. Those who are otherwise but harbor pretensions of being versed in this text, they are like parrot's recitations. This is a point one should understand in other

³³ *Vinayavastu*; Toh 1, Kangyur, 'dul ba ka, 87b:2.

³⁴ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*, chapter 2; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 45a:4-65b:5. This chapter contains an extensive meditation on the nature of suffering and their causes.

³⁵ *Catuhśatakaṭikā*, chapter 2; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 57a:5.

³⁶ *Śiṣyalekha*; Toh 4183, Tengyur, spring yig nge, 52a:1 and *Bhāvanakrama*, chapter 1, Toh 3915, Tengyur, dbu ma ki, 23b:5.

³⁷ This is a reference to Tsongkhapa's own *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, vol. II, especially chapter *

contexts [of the reading of this text] as well. As how this constitutes a compassion that has sentient beings as its object shall be explained later.

3. Paying homage to the compassion that has the factors of existence as its object, and the absence of object as its object

**The transmigrating beings fluctuate like reflections of moon in water;
Seeing them as fluctuating and as empty of intrinsic nature, 4ab**

To elucidate the compassion that has the factors of existence as its object and that has the absence of object as its object too by means of their objects of focus, the two lines “The transmigrating beings ...” are mentioned. Reading these [two lines] as “I shall bow to the one who, seeing the transmigrating beings to be subject to moment by moment disintegration, as fluctuating as the reflection of moon in a water stirred by wind, is compassionate towards them” is to pay homage to the compassion that has the factors of existence as its object. Similarly, to read them as “I shall bow down to the one who, seeing that though appearing as existing by means of intrinsic nature the transmigrating beings are, like the reflection of moon in water, devoid of intrinsic existence, is compassionate towards them” is to pay homage to the compassion devoid of objectification. In the commentary the term “transmigrating being” is dropped and reads “I shall bow to that compassionate.” [21] This is done so because it is understood that the term “transmigrating beings” is present in the context of the two latter objects of focus.

When in an utterly clear pool shimmering with ripples caused by not too strong a wind the reflection of moon appears as if one can see it actually being there. Seeing the moon disappear in water, the basis where it was seen previously, the sublime ones - namely those who are versed in [comprehending] this nature - they will perceive the reflection, on a moment by moment basis, to be transient and empty of the reality of moon as which appears. Just like this example, the bodhisattvas who are under the sway of compassion too, when they see the sentient beings - beings who reside in the ocean of egoistic view grasping at transient collection [of aggregates], an ocean into which flow the vast blue lakes of ignorance and replenish it, an ocean that is being beaten up by the storms of false conceptualization - when they see such beings who appear like reflections of their own positive and negative karma and upon whom the suffering of conditioned existence of moment by moment disintegration strikes, and when they see these beings as empty of intrinsic existence, a great compassion directed towards them arises [in these bodhisattvas]. This too arises, as explained earlier, on the basis of sense of endearment towards the sentient beings and by contemplating their situation of wandering in the cycle of existence. Although the egoistic view grasping at transient collection is a form of ignorance, the reason why ignorance is mentioned here separately is that this is intended to refer to the ignorance of grasping at the self-existence of phenomena.

Here, since it is explained in the commentary that the three types of compassion are distinguished, not on the basis of their aspects but on the basis of their objective focuses, the aspect of all three is the attitude wishing the sentient beings to be free of suffering. They are also similar in having the sentient beings as their object of focus. [For instance] in the context of the first compassion, the text states “having compassion for the beings,” while in the contexts of the two latter compassions, it states “the beings who

fluctuate.” So the sentient beings are explained to be their object of focus. Therefore, the compassion that has the factors of existence as its object does not merely takes the sentient beings as its object; rather it takes as its object sentient beings that are disintegrating on a moment by moment basis. Thus it focuses on sentient beings qualified by impermanence of momentariness. When one ascertains the sentient beings to be disintegrating on a moment by moment basis, in that awareness the existence of sentient beings as permanent, unitary and autonomous entity comes to cease, [22] so one is then be able to ascertain the absence of sentient beings that possess realities separate from their aggregates. At that point, as one comes to comprehend the sentient being to be designated upon the mere collection of the aggregates. Since it is such sentient beings that are designated upon mere phenomena like the aggregates that come to be the focus of the compassion, it is referred to as “compassion that has the factors of existence as its object.” The phrase “impermanent sentient beings” is only an illustration; taking sentient beings devoid of self-sufficient substantial reality as its object too can be referred to as a “compassion that has the factors of existence as its object.” Therefore, when the phrase “taking the factors of existence as its object” is used to refer to [the compassion] that focuses on the sentient beings that are merely designated upon the factors of existence, the middle term [“mere”] has been kept implicit.

Compassion that has the absence of object as its object too does not focus merely on the sentient beings; it focuses upon a specific object, namely, the sentient beings that are empty of intrinsic existence. The “absence of object” refers to the absence of true existence, which is the absence of the object of apprehension as clung to by the mind grasping at signs. Thus, taking sentient beings qualified by the absence of true existence as its object is referred to as “compassion that has the absence of object as its object” or as “non-objectifying compassion,” with the middle [connecting] term left implicit. [23]

Many Tibetan commentary authors assert that the second compassion itself perceives [sentient beings] as disintegrating on a moment by moment basis and that the third compassion itself perceives beings as devoid of intrinsic existence. These statements betray a lack of correct understanding of the focus and the aspect of these compassions. Both these two compassions must be accepted as being endowed with the aspect of wishing the sentient beings to be free of suffering. Now, if momentariness and the absence of intrinsic existence are asserted to be the objects of their aspects, one instance of compassion will possess, insofar as its mode of apprehension is concerned, two dissimilar aspects. Therefore, in order to take the sentient beings qualified by the two characteristics as the object of focus, the person who possesses these two compassions within their mental continuum must first ascertain the sentient beings to be momentary and devoid of intrinsic existence, and on that basis, the aspects of the two characteristics appears to him. It is not necessary, however, for the compassion itself to perceive [the beings] in terms of these two characteristics.

In both the root text and its commentary, the two latter compassions are described as being qualified by the two characteristics referred to earlier, while the first compassion is described as having sentient beings alone as its object, with no qualification of these characteristics. So the phrase “compassion that has sentient beings as its object” too represents an abbreviation for the sake of convenience. Therefore, those who assert that the first compassion invariably takes as its object sentient beings that are permanent,

unitary and autonomous are saying something incorrect. For even with respect to compassions that arise in the heart of those who have not found the view of no-self, there are many instances where compassion arises on the basis of taking sentient beings alone as its object. Even in the mental continuum of those who have found the view of the common level of no-self or the view of suchness, there are many instances of compassion that takes sentient without qualifying in terms of either of the two characteristics mentioned earlier. For example, even for someone who has eliminated the object of clinging of [the mind] grasping at the vase as permanent, someone who have thus realized it as impermanent, there can be many instances where every time he takes the vase as the object of his focus he does not do so by qualifying it as impermanent. In the case of those who have not realized the vase's impermanence too, every time they take the vase as their object of focus they do not do so by qualifying it in terms of permanence. So it is the case here as well.

Regardless of whichever of the three objects of focus they may take as their objects, these three compassions are, because they are all endowed with the aspect of wishing to protect all sentient beings from all forms of suffering, very different from the compassion of the disciples and the self-enlightened ones. When such compassions are generated, one will come to generate the awakening mind aspiring "I shall, by all means, attain buddhahood for the sake of the sentient beings."

As for the compassion that is the object of salutation here, although it is the initial stage of compassion that is primary, the other compassions of the bodhisattva are included as well. There is thus no contradiction in the commentary describing, in contexts such as this, the person generating compassion to be a bodhisattva.³⁸ If one asks, "With respect to the compassion that is the cause of the bodhisattva who has first entered the path, are there all three forms of compassion or not?" There are two possibilities here. Among the Mahāyāna lineage those who follow after reality proceeds first by searching for the understanding of the perfect suchness and, following their successful establishment of the ultimate truth, then, on the basis of generating great compassion for the sentient beings they generate the awakening mind. They then train in the bodhisattva deeds, which are the conducts of the sage. Those of the Mahayana lineage who follow after their faith, because they are incapable of realizing suchness first, [24] they train in the deeds, such as searching for the understanding of the perfect truth in the aftermath of having generated the awakening mind. The *Ornament of the Middle Way* states:

Preceded by a search for understanding the perfect truth,
And having ascertained thoroughly the ultimate truth,
To the world enveloped in [the mists of] destructive views,
One generates [great] compassion
And becomes heroic in working for other beings;
These learned ones in whom the thought of awakening flourishes,
They will perfectly partake in the sage's conduct,
Which are adorned with intelligence and compassion.

Those who follow after their perfect faith,
They, having generated the mind for complete awakening,

³⁸ *MABh*, 223b:6.

They embrace the conducts of the sage
And then strive to search for understanding the perfect truth.³⁹

Thus, as explained here, there are instances where all three forms of compassion are generated prior [to entering the path]. Even in the case of someone who has found the view of suchness earlier, when engaging in the bodhisattva deeds, there is no contradiction at all for him to establish the meaning of suchness and train in it. In fact, he must proceed in this manner.

Having made the salutation in the above manner, there is no actual promise to compose [the text] here. This, however, is not a flaw. This is just like the examples of the *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* and the *Sixty Stanzas*. Similarly, there are texts such as *Friendly Letter* where, while the promise to compose the text is written, but no actual salutation verse is composed. Nonetheless, since it is with the intention to compose *Entering the Middle Way* that salutation is being made, implicitly the promise to compose is present.

With regard to the factors to help others engage [with the text], such as the purpose [of composing the text] and relatedness, its subject matter is the twofold profound and the vast aspects [of the path], and the unique purpose [of composing the text] has already been explained earlier. As for the long-term aim, the immediate ones include, from implementing into practice what one has understood from the meaning of the treatise up to traversing the four paths.⁴⁰ The ultimate long-term aim is [the attainment of] the ground of the resultant stage. That the long-term aim depends upon the purpose and that the purpose depends upon the treatise constitute their relatedness.

³⁹ Śantarakṣita, *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛttī*; Toh 3885, Tengyur, dbu ma sa, 83a:4. These stanzas are found towards the end of the commentary, but not in the root text itself in the Dergé edition of the Tengyur.

⁴⁰ These refer to the first four stages of the path – the path of accumulation, of preparation, of seeing, and the path of meditation.

First Ground: Perfect Joy

B. The [outline] of the actual body of the treatise

This is twofold:

1. The causal grounds
2. The resultant ground

The first has three parts:

- a. Presenting in general the method of practicing according to this system
- b. Explaining the method of practicing at the ground of ordinary being in particular
- c. Presenting the grounds of the Noble bodhisattvas [25]

a. Presenting in general the method of practicing according to this system

One might ask, “If in this treatise, the profound and vast paths of the bodhisattva are being established by following after Nāgārjuna, what kind of stages of the path leading to buddhahood is accepted in the system of savior Nāgārjuna?”

Now, the purpose of establishing the system of the second Nāgārjuna and so on by means of study and critical reflection is to ensure that one finds a strong conviction in the method of practicing the perfect path and that one cannot be led away by the seeming false paths. Therefore, those who engage in the study and critical reflection yet found no conviction at all, no matter how much they train in the treatises of the traditions of the great chariots, in their own method of practicing the path, their way of engaging in study and critical reflection have failed to effectively hit the essential point. Because of this, even if they strive with hardship in the Great Vehicle, they will fail to extract its essence. One should, therefore, strive to understand how to tread on the stages of path.

Although there are many texts where Nāgārjuna has explained the partial aspects of the path, there are three treatises that present the overall body of the path pertaining to both the profound and vast aspects. As for how they are presented in the *Precious Garland*, the stanzas “The root of this are the awakening mind,” as well as “All the deeds, preceded by compassion ...”⁴¹ have already been cited earlier. Again, it states:

Here, to present in brief
The qualities of the bodhisattva, they are:
Giving, ethical discipline, forbearance and perseverance,
Concentration, wisdom, and compassion.

⁴¹ These two lines were cited earlier (p.* and p* respectively) as part of larger quotations from Nāgārjuna’s *Ratnavālī*.

Giving – this is to utterly shun one’s own interests;
Ethical discipline – this is to work for other’s welfare;
Forbearance – this is to relinquish hostility;
Increasing positive deeds is perseverance;
Concentration – this is one-pointedness and with no afflictions;
Wisdom – this is to establish the meaning of the truth;
Compassion – this is an intelligence that cares
For all beings equally as if they’re of single taste.

Giving [brings] resources, discipline happiness;
Forbearance luster, perseverance majesty;
Concentration tranquility, intelligence release;
With compassionate heart all aims are fulfilled;

All of these seven, without exception,
Through simultaneous perfection of all,
One attains the lordship of world itself,
Who is the object of inconceivable wisdom.⁴²

Thus, the identification of the six perfections, their benefits as well as how to train together with their complementary factor of compassion are explained. In this way, [Nāgārjuna] has presented the precedence of awakening mind generation, which is the basis of the bodhisattva deeds, and how one traverses the ten grounds through these deeds. [26]

In the *Hymn to the Ultimate Expanse* too, generating the awakening mind on the basis of going for refuge, how the ten perfections enhance the natural sphere, and the ten bodhisattva grounds were explained.⁴³ When this rough summation of the body of the path is elaborated further in the *Compendium of Sutras*, [Nāgārjuna] explains how finding the life of leisure and opportunity as well as finding faith in the teaching are difficult, and how, compared to these, the generation of mind for awakening is even more difficult to obtain.⁴⁴ He also provides extensive explanation related to how obtaining greater compassion for the sentient beings is difficult, and how, compared to all the things mentioned earlier, it is more difficult to obtain the relinquishment of the karmic obscuration of causing injury to the bodhisattvas, the relinquishment of the thoughts that disparage them, the relinquishment of the Mara’s acts, and the relinquishment of abandoning the sublime Dharma. Many such statements are made.⁴⁵

Compared to two earlier [texts], this is although clearer, it still remains difficult to [fully] comprehend the stages of the path. So /antideva, the great upholder of the master’s tradition, explains them in general both his *Compendium of Training* and the *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*, and in particular, he explains these extremely clearly and most extensively in his *Compendium of Training*, which is a meaning

⁴² Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 5:35-39; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 123a:7.

⁴³ *Dharmadhātustava*, 68 lists four factors that enhance the natural sphere (*dhātu*), these being (1) wisdom endowed with skilful means, (2) aspiration, (3) power, and (4) gnosis. Incidentally, these are also the last four in the list of ten perfections. See Toh 1118, Tengyur, stod tshogs ka, 43:5.

⁴⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma ki, 153a:2.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 158b:2.

commentary on [Nāgārjuna's] *Compendium of Sutras*. For example, one the basis of its clear explanation of the following – how, having contemplated the great value of the life of leisure and opportunity and its rarity, one reflects on the benefits of extracting the essence in this very life, how then, generating faith in general and in particular a firm faith based on contemplating the qualities of the Great Vehicle, one generates the aspirational aspect of the awakening mind, how then one upholds the vows of the engaging [awakening mind], how then one gives away, protects, purifies and enhances one's body, material resources and the roots of virtue – one should expound the *Compendium of Sutras*. In the *Four Hundred Stanzas* too, the overall body of the profound and vast aspects of the path are presented. [Similarly] the body of the path presented in condensed format in *Essence of the Middle Way*, the *Ornament of the Middle Way* and the *Stages of the Meditation of the Middle Way* are similar. So all the great personages who uphold Noble [Nāgārjuna's] tradition are congruent when it comes to the basic framework of the path. As for a means to provide ascertainment of these points without difficulty, something that is most convenient for those on the beginner's stage to engage with, I have presented a way of guiding [on the path] that is extremely easy to understand in the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*,⁴⁶ which represents the instruction of glorious Dipamkāra who was versed in the systems of the two great chariots. You should understand these from there. [27]

b. Explaining the method of practicing at the level of ordinary being in particular

One might wonder thus: “If, in this treatise, both the profound and vast aspects of the bodhisattva's path and their results, which constitute the object of attainment, are established, then after the salutation, the stages of the path of the ordinary person that are so important for the bodhisattva should have been presented. This is, however, not so. Instead, the text begins with the presentation of the grounds of the Noble Ones? How can this be appropriate?”

This [stage of the ordinary person] was presented in the context of the salutation itself; so it is not explained at this point here. The reason for this is because, by presenting the three principal causes on the basis of the meditative practice of which one becomes a bodhisattva, it was shown how those who wish to enter the Great Vehicle must first undertake the practice of these three. Not only are these three to be practiced first, they must be practiced even after becoming a bodhisattva. Not only that these three must be practiced first, even after becoming a bodhisattva one needs to engage in their practices. Furthermore, given that the wisdom not tending towards duality is primary among the bodhisattva deeds, illustrated by this, it must be understood that one must also engage in the other remaining deeds. In this respect, *Compendium of Sutras* states:

⁴⁶ This is a reference to Tsongkapa's own stages of the path writings, especially his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. An excellent English translation of this last work is available in three volumes under the same title. Dipamkāra here refers to the Indian Bengali Buddhist master widely known as Atiśa, who came to Tibet in the first half of the eleventh century. For a brief account of Atiśa's legacy in Tibet, see *The Book of Kadam: The Core Texts*, Introduction.

O bodhisattva, do not apply yourself to the profound ultimate reality divorced of the skilful method. For the conjoining of method and wisdom in union is the perfect practice of the bodhisattvas.⁴⁷

So, as stated here, one must train in the union of the two accumulations; one should not be contented with a partial method or wisdom nor should one place one's confidence in a one-pointed mind that is devoid of any distinctive method or wisdom.

I see some who, failing to determine the boundary of what is to be negated by reasoning that probes into the nature of suchness, negate everything. Because they confuse all forms of thought as grasping at true existence, they relegate all frameworks of convention to merely an ad hominem perspective, on the resultant stage, they assert, there exists only the Truth Body that is the mere suchness devoid of gnosis, and that the Form Body is encompassed within the continuum of the consciousness of the spiritual trainees. For them, all these endeavors like proving how, on the basis of scriptural authority and reasoning, the disciples and self-enlightened ones are born from the excellent sages, and how the buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas will not be the standpoints of *Entering the Middle Way*. The meditative cultivation of the three factors too will not be that of the tradition of the Middle Way, but posited merely from the perspective of others. [28] In doing so, they will come to denigrate all the paths that one needs to put into practice on one's own part. Furthermore, all the statements about how the sentient beings devoid of intrinsic existence revolve in the cycle of existence through six factors that share parallels to a paddlewheel will turn into a set of contradictions alone. You should understand, therefore, that they have engaged in a distorted exposition of the meaning of the treatise right from its salutation verses.

So you should recognize that even within the method of training in giving and so on – taught in the context of the grounds of the Noble Ones – there are many deeds that must be practiced right from the ground of the ordinary person. Understanding this, you should strive to engage in their practice from this very moment.

c. Presenting the grounds of the Noble bodhisattvas

This third outline has three parts:

- i. Presenting the ten grounds collectively
- ii. Presenting the individual grounds
- iii. Presenting the qualities of the ten grounds

i. Presenting the ten grounds collectively

The explanation of the ten grounds offered here is based upon the following in the *Precious Garland* where a broad presentation of ten or eleven grounds is made:

Just as in the disciple's vehicle

⁴⁷ *This should be *Sūtrasamuccaya*, and not *Śikṣasamuccaya* as annotated in the critical edition; ask Choedar to correct the note.

Eight disciple grounds are mentioned,
Likewise in the Great Vehicle
There are the bodhisattva's ten grounds.⁴⁸

The presentation is based also on the *Ten Grounds Sutra*. That the ten grounds, such as the Perfect Joy, are referred to [here in the text] as the ten “awakening minds” is understood in the sense of the ultimate awakening mind. The nature of the ten grounds, which are characterized as being the ultimate awakening mind, is described in the following in the commentary:

When the uncontaminated gnosis of the bodhisattvas that is sustained by compassion and so on is divided in terms of its facets, it acquires the name “ground” for it becomes the locus of the qualities.⁴⁹

This presents [the nature of the ten grounds] by means of explaining the nature of a ground, what sustains it, how it acquires the name “ground,” and meaning of its etymology. With respect to the nature of what is referred to in the phrase “uncontaminated gnosis,” some explain this in terms of not being suitable for enhancing contamination as defined in the *Treasury [of Higher Knowledge]*.⁵⁰ This indicates a lack of cognizance of the unique meaning of what constitutes being uncontaminated according to this [Candrakīrti's] tradition. Our own position is this: *That which is tainted either by ignorance grasping at true existence or by the propensities of such ignorance is [the definition of being] contaminated*; [29] the gnosis that is free of such a taint is uncontaminated. This is, as stated in the following in the *Clear Words*:

They do not do so from the point of view of the nature of the object of an uncontaminated gnosis that is free of the cataracts of ignorance.”⁵¹

Until the attainment of the ground of the buddha, as for a mental state that is not tainted by the propensities of ignorance, there is none except for the non-conceptual gnosis of the meditative equipoise of the Nobles Ones. That too comes about intermittently, for when the [Noble Ones] rise out of their meditative equipoise, their states of mind arise as tainted by the propensities of ignorance. Up until the seventh ground there is the taint of ignorance; from the eighth ground and for the two arhats, since the polluting ignorance has ceased, there is no taint from this. However, they do possess the taint from the propensities of ignorance. Also, with regard to the commentary's description of the first ground as bearing the name “non-dual gnosis,”⁵² this is stated in sense of the absence of the duality of a separated perception of object and subject. It should not be understood to mean only a gnosis that has relinquished the two extremes.

⁴⁸ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 5:40; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 123b:2.

⁴⁹ *MABh*, p.224b:2.

⁵⁰ Tsongkhapa is here referring to the passage in Vasubhandu's *Abhidharmakośa* (1:4; Toh 4089, Tengyur, mngon pa ku, *) where the text defines what it means to be contaminated.

⁵¹ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapada*; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma 'a, 13a:3.

⁵² *MABh*, p.224a:6

In the writings of this master, on many occasions, he speaks of wisdom and gnosis that is free of the obscuration of ignorance. Therefore, taking ignorance and its propensities to be universal properties of awareness and asserting that, when these two cease, gnosis too becomes no more and maintain this to be the standpoint of this master, constitute a serious denigration. For this is like the assertion of the non-Buddhist Jaina's standpoint that, when the pollutants are exhausted, the mind too becomes exhausted. The *Precious Garland* too states:

Therefore one becomes free by seeing thus;
“By what means does one see?” if asked,
Conventionally, I speak here of the mind.⁵³

Here, in response to the question “Through what kind of agency of subject does one perceive suchness directly,” it is explained that, on the conventional level, it is the mind that directly perceives suchness. Also the *Hymn to the Ultimate Expanse* states:

Just as a body armor is cleansed by fire,
When an armor sullied by all kinds of stains
Is put into a blazing fire,
Its stains are burnt but not the armor.

Likewise, this clear radiant mind,
Ridden with stains born of desire,
The fire of gnosis burns the stains,
But not the clear radiant mind itself.⁵⁴

It states here that, just as when a beaded stone costume is placed into a fire, the fire burns off the stains but not the costume itself, [30] in the same manner, when the stains of the mind are burnt off by the fire of wisdom, it is the stains that are burnt but the clear radiant mind does not become no more.

Although the two gnosis - the meditative equipoise of a Noble bodhisattva and the meditative equipoise of a Noble disciple or that of a self-enlightened one – are equal in directly realizing the ultimate reality without any tainting from the propensities of ignorance, the reason why one is posited as the ground of a Noble bodhisattva while another is not is due to whether or not one has fallen under the sway of great compassion and whether or not one has the capacities, such as the twelve hundred sets of qualities. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, there is a tremendous difference between them in terms of whether or not, during the path of accumulation and path of preparation, they have expanded their intelligence with respect to the suchness of the two selflessnesses on the basis of [contemplating] incalculable amount of reasoning.

The phrase “when divided in terms of its facets” means that it is one and the same uncontaminated gnosis, which is the whole that is being distinguished in terms of its sequential [temporal] stages with its earlier and latter parts becoming the individual facets. They are called “ground” because they serve as the locus or the basis of the

⁵³ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 4:63-4; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 120b:3.

⁵⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Dharmadhātustava*, 20; Toh 1118, Tengyur, stod tshogs ka, 64b:1.

qualities and, in this sense, they resemble the earth. These statements indicate that all ten ultimate grounds are posited on the basis of non-conceptual gnosis alone.

Although in this respect [all ten grounds] are same, it is on the basis of the following four features how the grounds such as the “Perfect Joy” are posited as distinct grounds. (1) The first distinctive feature arises on the basis of the progressive increment of the number of qualities, such as that the first ground has twelve sets of hundred, the second twelve sets of thousand, and so on; these shall be described later. (2) The second distinctive feature pertains to the ever increasing enhancement of the excellent forces. Although some describe this in terms of the shaking of hundred realms and a thousand realms and so on, this has already been included in the increment of the number of the qualities. So this appears to pertain to the ever increasing enhancement of the power of the individual grounds with respect to their power of cleansing the pollutants as well as their power of traversing the path. (3) The third pertains to the feature of exceeding accomplishment of the perfections, such as the exceeding accomplishment of the perfection of giving on the first ground, the exceeding accomplishment of the perfection of ethical discipline on the second ground, and so on. (4) The fourth distinctive feature pertains to the ever enhancing birth of [karmic] fruition, such as, on the first ground, being born as a monarch that reigns over the earth, and, on the second ground, being born as a monarch that reigns over the four continents, and so on. [31]

Thus, given that there exist such great differences among the non-conceptual gnosis of the individual grounds in their capacities, such as in terms of the numbers of their qualities, these grounds are posited as being distinct. Furthermore, since the qualities of the stages subsequent to the meditative equipoise of the individual grounds must also be included as part of the respective grounds, these grounds should not be confined only to states of meditative equipoise. It is in this way the individual grounds are to be distinguished. As for distinctions based on differing focuses of object or aspects of cognition, there are no differences at all for all these ultimate grounds. The *Ten Grounds Sutra* states:

Just as an expert cannot speak of or see
The traces of birds cruising across the skies,
Likewise with respect to all the grounds of the conqueror’s children,
If one cannot speak of these, how can one hear of them?⁵⁵

Although the birds cruise across the empty skies, as for the traces of these birds, the experts of the world cannot describe them by means of speech nor are they perceived by the mind. Likewise, although the ultimate grounds that resemble birds cruising across the space-like ultimate reality, the manner in which these grounds traverse – that is the exact way in which the Noble Ones experience it – now, if the Noble Ones themselves cannot express this, it is stated here, then those who are listening to it cannot hear it exactly as seen [by the Noble Ones].

ii. Presenting the individual grounds

This has three parts:

⁵⁵ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 174a:4.

- 1) Explaining the [first] five grounds, such as The Perfect Joy
- 2) Explaining the sixth ground, The Manifest
- 3) Explaining the [remaining] four grounds, such as The Gone Afar

The first is fivefold:

- a) The first ground, The Perfect Joy
- b) The second ground, The Stainless
- c) The third ground, The Luminous
- d) The fourth ground, The Radiant
- e) The fifth ground, The Unconquerable

The first has three parts:

- i) Brief definition of the ground, the basis
- ii) Extensive presentation of the qualities, its properties
- iii) Conclusion by means of describing the benefits of the ground

i) Brief definition of the ground, the basis

**The heart of conqueror's children fall under compassion's sway,
[Yearning] to help free thoroughly these transmigrating beings. 4cd**

**In the joy thoroughly dedicated to by Samandrabhadra's aspiration,
That which abides in this is called the first [ground]. 5ab**

The bodhisattvas on the first ground, who, in the manner described earlier, [32] sees the beings to be devoid of intrinsic existence and holds this absence of intrinsic existence as the qualification of their object of compassion, his heart comes under the power of great compassion to help utterly free the sentient beings. They abide on a ground that bears the name The Perfect Joy, whereon he dedicates all his virtues of the aspirations of the bodhisattva Samandrabhadra. The ultimate [awakening] mind of the bodhisattva who thoroughly abides in such a non-dual gnosis, which is illustrated by its effects, such as the number of its qualities, this is known as the first supramundane mind.

Given that all the countless hundreds of thousands of aspirational prayers made by the bodhisattva on the first ground, such as the ten great aspirational prayers mentioned in the *Ten Grounds Sutra*, are encompassed in Samantabhadra's prayers, in order to embrace all aspirational prayers, the root text mentions Samantabhadra's aspirations. This refers to the "Vows of Good Conduct."⁵⁶ Within this, the two stanzas, beginning with the line "Heroic Mañjuśrī...", are described in the *Compendium of Trainings* as the unexcelled dedication.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ This is *Bhadracaryāprañidhāna*, which is found as part 4 of the *Flower Ornament Scripture*. In the Tibetan canon this prayer is found also as Toh 1095, gzung bsdus vam.

⁵⁷ Śāntideva, *Śikṣasāmmucaya*; Toh 3940, Tengyur, dbu ma khi, 162b:5.

Now, in the commentary one finds the following statement:

Just as one does not accept the disciple on the path of preparation to have entered the first fruit, even the bodhisattva's highest of the great stage that engages by means of imagination, which would imminently bring about the emergence of the first ground, this too is a ground where the bodhisattva's awakening mind is not yet generated.⁵⁸

What is meant in the above is that this is a ground where the ultimate awakening mind has not yet been generated. In general, as I have already explained earlier, in this system it is accepted that even from a stage lower than this the mind for unexcelled awakening has already been generated and that bodhisattvas exist there as well. In the *Compendium of Trainings* too, since the presence of awakening mind in ordinary beings has been established by means of numerous sutras, those who maintain that these are similitude bodhisattvas are making false explanations. One might contend, "Since the *Compendium of Higher Knowledge*⁵⁹ describes those who are on a single sitting from the disciple's path of preparation to the attainment of the first fruit as entering the [fruit of] stream enterer, the analogy does not hold." That [the stage of] entering the stream enterer is attained from the stage of the Noble One is stated in the *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*, while in the *Compendium of Higher Knowledge* it is described as [you have cited] earlier. So, of these two differing positions that have emerged, this master [Candrakīrti] subscribes to the standpoint that is in accord with the *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*. [33] This is in accord with what is described in the following in *Compendium of Sutras*. Compared to someone offering, on a daily basis, heavenly nourishment endowed with hundredfold flavor and heavenly garments to followers after their faith equal to the number of atoms in the entire universe, if another person offers a single meal for a single day to one who follows after reality, he generates incalculable and far greater merits than the former. Again, compared to someone making similar offerings to the followers after reality equal to numbers described earlier, if another person offers a single meal for a single day to a person of the eighth [stage], this generates incalculable and far greater merits than the former.⁶⁰ That the two followers [being referred to here] are in the contexts of the path of accumulation and path of preparation is clear.

ii) *Extensive presentation of the qualities, its properties*

⁵⁸ *MABh*, 224b:2. Candrakīrti is pointing out here that just as someone who is on the path of preparation on the disciple's path to arhathood cannot be said to have entered the first of the four fruits – the stream-enterer, once-returner, never-returner, and arhat – in the case of someone who is on the last stage of the bodhisattva's path of preparation too, his would be a stage where the ultimate awakening mind has not yet arisen. "The highest of the great stage" (*chen po 'I chen po*) is the last of the nine stages – small of small, medium small, great small, and so on – of the path of preparation. The phrase "engaging by means of imagination" (*mos pas spyod pa*) indicates that, until one has reached the path of seeing, one's engagement with the ultimate truth remains at the level of concepts and imagination. The two first paths – path of accumulation and the path of preparation – belong to this stage of engagement by means of imagination.

⁵⁹ Asaṅga, *Abhidharmasammucaya*; Toh 4049, Tengyur, sems tsam *ri*, 107b:6.

⁶⁰ Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasammucaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma *khi*, 160b:1. The "eighth stage" here refers to the stream-enterer, who is the eighth if one lists the "eight Noble Ones" starting from the arhat as the first. The eight persons are the enterer and abider of the fruit of *stream-enterer*, the enterer and abider of *once returner*, the two of *never returner*, and finally, the enterer and abider of the arhat stage.

This has three parts:

- (1) The qualities that embellish one's own mental continuum
- (2) The qualities that outshine other's mental continuum
- (3) Presenting the attribute that is preeminent on the first ground

The first has two parts:

- (a) Differentiating the individual qualities and describing them
- (b) Presenting the qualities in the form of a summary

The first has three parts:

- (i) The quality of obtaining a meaningful epithet
- (ii) Four qualities, such as being born in the lineage
- (iii) Three qualities, such as pressing down on the higher grounds

(i) *The attribute of obtaining a meaningful epithet*

**From that point on since one has attained this
He is called by the title “bodhisattva” alone; 5cd**

From the point when the bodhisattva has entered the first ground, because he has attained the ultimate [awakening] mind, at this time when he has transcended the stage of the ordinary being, he is to be referred to by the term “ultimate bodhisattva” alone. He should not be expressed by any other characterization that is not in accord with this title. For, by then, he is a Noble bodhisattva.

In the commentary, citing *Cloud of Jewels*, it is stated that the one on the [stage of] great supreme Dharma on the path of preparation, one has not attained the ground of ultimate bodhisattva.⁶¹ From this, we can understand that the bodhisattva on the first ground is being referred to by the title of a special kind of bodhisattva. *The Perfection of Wisdom in Twenty-Five Thousand* states:

How does one understand this? With respect to that which has not yet come into being, that which has not perfectly come into being, that which has ceased, these are not as imputed by the childish ordinary beings and not as found by the childish ordinary beings. [34] Therefore, they are called the “bodhisattvas”.⁶²

Indirectly, it is being stated here that those who obtain the suchness of these phenomena just as found by the Noble Ones to be bodhisattvas. This too is intended in the sense of the ultimate bodhisattvas. It does not that there are no genuine bodhisattvas among the ordinary beings.

⁶¹ *Ratnamegasūtra*; Toh 231, Kangyur, mdo sde wa, 47a:7.

⁶² Toh 9, Kangyur, shes phyin, nyi khri ka, 30b:6.

(ii) *Four qualities, such as being in the lineage*

**He is born in the lineage of the Tatagathas as well;
He has rid himself entirely of the three binding factors;
Such a bodhisattva upholds the state that is supreme joy;
He is capable too of shaking a hundred world systems. 6**

Furthermore, this bodhisattva who abides on the first ground, because he has transcended beyond all the grounds of ordinary being and that of the disciples and the self-enlightened ones, and because the path that is certain to follow to the buddha's ground has arisen within his mental continuum, he is born also into the lineage of the Tatagathas. Not embarking on other paths, his lineage is confirmed within his own path. Since on the first ground he directly perceives the no-selfness of person – that the person has no existence by means of self-defining characteristics – he has ridden himself entirely of the three binding factors of egoistic view of transient collection, the affliction (**phra rgyas; anuśya*) of doubt, attachment to [false] views as supreme and to [inferior] moral standards and conduct as supreme for they do not arise ever again.

This indicates that their seeds are relinquished; the egoistic view grasping at transient collection [referred to here] is the intellectually acquired kind, which is an object of elimination on the path of seeing, and not the innate one. Given that he has ridden himself also of other afflictions that are the objects of elimination on the path of seeing, why is it that only these three are mentioned? There are two schools of interpretation on the intent of this statement made in the sutra, of which the better one is as presented in the following in the *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*:

Not wanting to go, choosing a wrong path,
And harboring doubts about the path –
These obstruct one's journey to liberation;
Therefore, these three are presented.⁶³

For example, for someone who wishes to travel to another place, there are three main obstacles – not wanting to go, choosing the wrong road, and harboring doubts about the road. Similarly, to travel to liberation too, there are three principal obstacles. With the first [the egoistic view], because of the fear of liberation, one does not want to travel there. With the third [attachment to inferior moral standards and conduct], one chooses the wrong path as one relies upon another path. With the second [afflicted doubt], one harbors doubt about the path. Therefore these three [binding factors] have been mentioned.

This bodhisattva on the first ground, because he has entered a confirmed lineage as described earlier, he obtains the qualities that result from this and becomes free from the faults that are the object of elimination on this ground. As such, a unique joy has arisen in him. Because he experiences abundance of perfect joy, this bodhisattva upholds the state that constitutes supreme joyfulness. Since he possesses extraordinary grounds of

⁶³ Vasubhandu, *Abhidharmakośa*, 5:44; Toh 4089, Tengyur, mngon pa *ku*, 17b:3.

perfect joy this ground is known also as The Perfect Joy. [On this ground] he is capable also of shaking utterly a hundred different world systems.

(iii) *Three qualities, such as pressing down on the higher grounds*

**Pressing from one ground to another, he travels perfectly to the higher ones;
At that point the path to all classes of lower realms are blocked for him;
At that point all the grounds of ordinary being cease for him; 7abc**

Rejoicing greatly in stepping over to the second ground from the first, perfectly, the bodhisattva travels to the higher grounds. When the first ground is attained, at that point, for this bodhisattva, all the paths that lead to the lower realms are blocked or come to an end.

One might ask: “Isn’t it the case that after attaining the *peak* stage of the path of preparation it is impossible for someone to go to the lower realms due to karma? So why is the cessation of the path to the lower realms dependent upon attaining this ground?” Now, the impossibility of going to the lower realms after attaining the *peak* is not due to its seed being destroyed by means of an antidote; rather it is due to there being the lack of adequate conditions. In contrast, here [on this ground] this is due to its seed being destroyed by an antidote. In the *Compendium of Higher Knowledge* too the aggregates and elements of the lower realms are described as objects of elimination on the path of seeing.⁶⁴ At the point when the bodhisattva has attained the first ground all the grounds or states of the ordinary being has ceased for him. [36]

(b) *Presenting the qualities in the form of a summary*

Just like the Noble One on the eighth stage he too is described.

In brief, just as for the one who has entered the stream-enterer’s [fruit], who is the eighth Noble One – eighth when counted from the top from the four abiding in the fruits and the four entering the fruits – qualities of abandonment and realization commensurate with one’s [stage] come about because of having attained the properties of the Noble One, likewise this bodhisattva too is described clearly as receiving the qualities of abandonment and realization because of his having attained the first ground.

(b) *The qualities that outshine other’s mental continuum*

This has three parts:

- (i) How, on this ground, the disciples and self-enlightened ones are outshone by means of his lineage
- (ii) How, on the seventh ground, the disciples and self-enlightened ones are outshone by means of his intelligence
- (iii) The concluding points of why these statements are made

⁶⁴ Asaṅga, *Abhidharmasammucaya*; Toh 4049, Tengyur, sems tsam *ri*, 65a:2.

(i) *How, on this ground, the disciples and self-enlightened ones are outshone by means of his lineage*

**This mind for full awakening, even he who abides on the first [ground],
Those born from the sage's speech as well as the self-enlightened ones,
They're defeated by his power of merit his merits enhance ever more;**

Let alone on the second and other grounds of the mind for full awakening, even he who abides on the first ground, due to the power of his merits of conventional awakening mind and compassion, defeats – that is to say outshines – the disciples who are born from the speech of the excellent sages as well as the self-enlightened ones. His merits increases ever more compared to these two. This is a different feature of attribute, an attribute that is distinct from the ones described earlier. This attribute is as described in the following in the *Liberating Life Story of Maitreya*:

Child of the lineage, it is thus. For example, the son of a king who was born not so long ago and carries the name of royalty, because of the greatness of his lineage, he outshines all the assembly of senior and key ministers. [37] Likewise, the bodhisattva on the beginner's stage who has generated the awakening mind not so long ago, who has been born in the lineage of the Tatagathas, the Dharma kings, because of his awakening mind and compassion, he outshines the disciples and the self-enlightened ones who had practiced pure conduct for a long period of time.⁶⁵

Child of the lineage, it is thus. For example, the qualities of the offspring of a *garuḍa*, the king of birds, born not so long ago – such as the strength of its wings and the total clarity of his vision – these do not exist in all the mature birds of other breeds. Likewise, the qualities of the bodhisattva who has generated the first ground of the mind for awakening and has sprung perfectly in the continual lineage of great *garuḍa*-like Tatagathas – such as the *garuḍa* offspring-like [bodhisattva's] power of the wings of his generation of awakening mind aspiring for the omniscient state, a power that outshines others, and the quality of his vision of pure altruistic intention – these do not exist in the disciples as well as in all the self-enlightened ones that have definitely emerged [from cyclic existence] for hundreds or a thousand eons.⁶⁶

In the *Explanation of the Commentary*, although the meaning of these two citations is explained in terms of the linguistically derived awakening mind,⁶⁷ the phrases “on the beginner's stage” and “having generated the mind not so long ago” are from the point of view of the ultimate awakening mind. For instance, earlier it was explained that being

⁶⁵ Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *ka*, 231b:1.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 218b:5.

⁶⁷ Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma *ra*, 68a:4. “Linguistically derived awakening mind” (*brda las byung ba 'I sems bkyed*) refers to a simulated form of awakening mind, where the thought remains closely tied to an intellectual understanding of the meaning of the terms. In contrast, genuine awakening mind is characterized by spontaneity and its arising is not dependent upon hearing the term or contemplating the meaning of the term.

born in the lineage of the Tathagathas is from the first ground; in the two citations too, other than having two distinct metaphors, their reference remains the same; also the meaning of these three lines of the root text appears to be a summary of the content of that [cited] sutra. In many sources, such as the *Ornament of Mahāyāna Sūtras*, too “the awakening mind of pure altruistic intention” is described as being the awakening mind generation of the first ground.⁶⁸

“If this is so,” one might ask, “do you not accept that the conventional awakening mind of the bodhisattvas on the ordinary stage outshines the disciples and self-enlightened ones?” This is not the case. In that very sutra, one reads:

Child of the lineage, it is thus. For example, even if diamond, the most precious stone, [38] is broken it still outshines all the extraordinary ornaments made of gold, it does not lose the title of “the sovereign among all stones,” and it can avert poverty entirely. Likewise, O Child of the lineage, the diamond that is the mind generated for the omniscient state, the diamond, though it might be one without a force, it outshines all the gold ornaments that are the qualities of the disciples and of the self-enlightened ones; [the person who possesses] this does not lose the title of bodhisattva, and it averts all the impoverishment of cyclic existence.⁶⁹

This sūtra is cited in the *Compendium of Trainings* to substantiate the point that one should not disparage an awakening that is divorced of the deeds,⁷⁰ and for someone who has attained the grounds, it is impossible for an awakening mind to be divorced of the deeds.

(ii) *How, on the seventh ground, the disciples and self-enlightened ones are outshone by means of his intelligence*

When he is gone afar his intelligence will exceed as well;

When this bodhisattva on the first ground arrives on the ground of the Gone Afar, in addition to outshining the disciples and self-enlightened ones by means of his conventional awakening mind, he will outshine them by means of the power of his intelligence as well. This is as stated in the following in the *Ten Grounds Sutra*:

Children of the conquerors, it is thus. For example, the son of a king who is born in the royal lineage and carries the name of royalty, the instant he is born, because of the king’s majesty, he outshines the entire assembly of ministers. This is not done so by means of his critical acumen through the power of his own intelligence. When he reaches maturity in age, at that point, by generating the power of his own intelligence he will totally supersede the tasks of all the ministers. Likewise, O children of the conquerors, the bodhisattva too, because of the greater force of his altruistic intention, the instant he generates the awakening

⁶⁸ Maitreya, *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, 5:2; Toh 4020, Tengyur, sems tsam *phi*, 4b:3.

⁶⁹ Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *ka*, 223a:5.

⁷⁰ Śāntideva, *Śikṣasāmmucaya*; Toh 3940, Tengyur, dbu ma *khi*, 7b:7. *This note is missing in the Tib. edition.

mind he outshines all the disciples and the self-enlightened ones. This is, however, not done so by means of his critical acumen through the power of his intelligence. However, the bodhisattva who abides on this seventh ground, because he abides so with the greatness of his knowledge of the appropriate object, he totally supersedes all the tasks of the disciples and the self-enlightened ones.⁷¹

Given that the phrase “the instant he generates the awakening mind” is being used here in the context of the first ground, it refers to the *awakening mind of pure altruistic intention*. So, it is only from the ground of Gone Afar that the bodhisattva outshines the disciples and the self-enlightened ones by means of generating the power of his own intelligence. Below the sixth ground, they do not outshine the two through the power of his intelligence. [39] The meaning of the phrase “superseding all the tasks of the disciples and the self-enlightened ones,” this we understand to mean that the two [beings] are outshined by means of the bodhisattva’s intelligence on the basis of summarizing the meaning of the commentary. When explaining what is meant by the power of intelligence, there is the phrase “abiding with the greatness of his knowledge of the appropriate object.” This refers to the greatness of the bodhisattva knowing his appropriate object, namely the cessation, which is the perfect reality limit.

On the meaning of this point, some assert that although there is no difference between those below the sixth ground and the gnosis of the seventh in terms of their natures, the first [six grounds] do not possess the capacity to eliminate the obstructions to knowledge, while the seventh ground gnosis possesses such a capacity. Because of this, they assert, there is the difference in terms of outshining or not outshining through intelligence. Some maintain that this is due to the fact that from the seventh ground the bodhisattva is able to enter into the meditative absorptions through a process of leaping over. Yet others say that, because the gnosis of the seventh ground is found to be manifestly directed towards the irreversible eighth ground, [on the seventh ground] the bodhisattva outshines [the disciples and self-enlightened ones] through intelligence.

Of these the first is incorrect. In this system [of Candrakīrti] it is maintained that all [instances of] grasping at the self-existence of persons are forms of afflicted ignorance and, to eliminate this ignorance in the manner in which it cannot arise ever again, its seeds must become exhausted. Furthermore, such elimination is common with the two arhats; so the eliminating of the seed of grasping at true existence does not constitute eliminating the obstructions to knowledge. Now, the obscuration in the form of propensities, which are different from the seeds, and identified here as an obstruction to knowledge, the eliminating of this does not occur until the eighth ground is attained. Therefore, in this [Candrakīrti’s] system, the presentations of those traditions that maintain the grasping at true existence to be an obstruction to knowledge and, where, it is divided into nine classes of obscuration to knowledge in terms of the weak, the middling and the great, which are then eliminated by the path of meditation, such as the second ground and so on, this view is not accepted here. I shall explain this more later.

The second position too is incorrect. In the lexicons of archaic terms, the word “leaping over” is written also as “jumbled sequence,”⁷² which refers to a conflagration of

⁷¹ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 234a:1.

⁷² Tib. *thod brgal*, and *snral zhi*, respectively.

sequence. There is no explanation why entering into meditative absorptions through such a process is not found below the sixth ground and exists from the seventh ground alone.

The third position is also incorrect. [40] Here, since the doubt about why on the sixth ground and below the bodhisattva does not outshine [the disciples and self-enlightened ones] by means of realization and why he can do this on the seventh ground is still left unresolved. So this [explanation] is analogous to someone giving the subject of the argument as the proof!

In the *Explanation of the Commentary*, however, it states that on the seventh ground, because there remains the thought “I shall enter the path,” there is an effort yet given that the bodhisattva does not manifestly experience such signs of the teaching as the sutras, he has attained the path of signlessness. Those below the sixth ground as well as the disciples and the self-enlightened ones do not possess this signlessness [the seventh ground bodhisattva] is described as outshining [the disciples and self-enlightened ones] through his intelligence.⁷³ Be that as it may, it appears that here the distinction needs to be drawn on the basis of realization of suchness. This, in turn, is to be made on the basis of entering into and rising out of suchness that is the perfect reality limit. So, as shall be explained later in the section on the seventh ground, it is from this ground on that the bodhisattva is able to enter into and rise out of the cessation, which is the perfect reality-limit, within each and every single moment of cognition. This is not possible on the lower grounds. This is what my sublime teacher says, which is excellent.⁷⁴ Because, during the stages of engagement [on the path] by means of imagination, though it is not difficult to enter into and rise out of meditative absorption on emptiness in which one’s mind and suchness have not fused into a single taste, on the stage of the Noble One, however, where one’s mind and suchness have fused together as if water is poured into water, this mode of entering into and rising out [of emptiness] is extremely hard.

One might wonder: “Isn’t this discussion of how on the seventh ground the disciples and self-enlightened ones are outshone through intelligence is out of context here during [the presentation of] the qualities of the first ground?” There is no such flaw of conflating the contexts. Here [in this text] the discussion on the first ground and so on are based on the *Ten Grounds Sutra*, and in that sutra a distinction is clearly drawn between how those abiding on the first ground outshine the disciples and self-enlightened ones by means of their conventional awakening mind and not by means of their ultimate awakening mind. At that point, the thought arises as to from what ground does the bodhisattva outshines through his realization. So to help resolve this doubt, it is explained, that it is from the seventh ground that he outshines through his realization. Here in this text too this [question] is addressed, so it is perfectly appropriate within the context here.

(iii) *The concluding points of why these statements are made*

This has three parts:

⁷³ Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma ra, 68a:4.

⁷⁴ This is Rendawa Shönu Lodrö, who was Tsongkapa’s principal teacher on the Middle Way philosophy. See, for example, his *Lamp Illuminating Suchness (de kho na nyid gsal ba’I sgron me)*, p.49.

- 1' How the *Ten Grounds Sūtra* demonstrates that disciples and self-enlightened ones possess the realization of phenomena as devoid of intrinsic existence
- 2' Presenting the sources that substantiate this [41]
- 3' Repudiating the objections against this presentation

The first is twofold:

- a' Clear explanation of the intent of the commentary's author
- b' Demonstrating how this is the position of the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*

a' Clear Explanation of the Intent of the Commentary author

On the basis of this citation from the *Ten Grounds Sutra*, where it states that on the sixth ground and below the bodhisattva cannot outshine the disciples and self-enlightened ones by through realization, it can be clearly determined that amongst the disciples and self-realized ones too there exists the understanding of the phenomena as being devoid of intrinsic existence. For if they lack this wisdom, then, like the seers who, through the mundane path [viewing the realms in terms] of being tranquil or coarse, are free from attachment towards all grounds, except for the peak of existence, these disciple and self-enlightened arhats too would be outshone through realization even by the bodhisattva who has generated the first ground of the ultimate awakening mind. For they [the disciples and self-enlightened ones] too would be devoid of the knowledge of things as absent of intrinsic existence. The statement that otherwise, like the non-Buddhist sages, the disciples and self-enlightened ones too will have not eliminated all the afflictions experienced in the three realms along with their seeds demonstrates that, if they lack familiarity with emptiness on the basis of perfectly realizing it, this will resemble the mundane paths that view [the realms in terms of] being tranquil or coarse insofar as their incapacity to bringing about the end of the seed of afflictions are concerned. Furthermore, if one lacks the realization of suchness, as one will then objectify the aggregates, such as form, as real, his mind will remain distorted. Therefore there will be no genuine comprehensive realization of the no-self of person. This is because one has not yet eradicated the object of perceiving the aggregates, which are the basis of designating the self, as being real. This indicates that if one has not eradicated the object of clinging of the grasping at the aggregates – the basis of designation – as real one will have not eradicated as well the object of clinging of the grasping at the person – the designated property - as being real. Thus, because one would have not realized the person as devoid of true existence, the text demonstrates, one would have also not realized a genuine comprehensive no-self of person.

The meaning of the points presented above is extremely difficult to comprehend. Even those who rely on this tradition [of Candrakīrti] and the texts of Śāntideva, they do not appear to have expounded it well. So to critically explore this topic, I shall present here (1) how the doubt arises, and (2) how to resolve it.

[Question:] “Now, it is certainly the case that it will be possible for some to establish by means of a valid cognition the sixteen characteristics [of the four noble truths], such as impermanence and no-self in terms of the absence of a substantially

existing self-sufficient person as being identical with the aggregates or being separate from them. [42] Once this happens, it will also emerge that the principal trainees of such [a teaching] will come to cultivate great familiarity with that [realization]. And if this can happen, then that there will be a direct realization of the no-self of person will be established by the reasoning that proves the yogic direct perception. If so, this will establish how the path of seeing realizing such [no-self] eliminates the intellectually acquired afflictions. When this is established, then the path of meditation wherein the no-self of person, which has already been perceived directly, is made familiar becomes established; this means that it can eliminate even the innate afflictions thus establishing the possibility of the cessation of all contaminations of afflictions. So, even without realizing emptiness, one can eliminate all the afflictions of the three realms including their seeds. This will be so because the eliminations effected by the two paths – the path of seeing and the path of meditation – are, as described earlier, in the mode of eliminating by the supramundane path. Therefore, even with the path meditating on the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, all the afflictions can be ceased.”

[Answer:] I shall explain this in the following. We do not say that it is not possible that, if one has not found the view of suchness it is possible for such a person to establish the sixteen characteristics [of the four noble truths], such as impermanence, by means of valid cognition, and that the principal trainees of these [teachings] cannot meditate upon them with great effort, and that, on the basis of such meditation, he would not directly perceive a coarse level of no-self and achieve familiarity with what has been perceived.

“What is it then?” one might ask. [Answer:] Since such a path does not constitute a genuine comprehensive realization of the no-self of person, we do not maintain this path to be a supramundane path of seeing or a supramundane path of meditation. Therefore, it cannot eliminate the seeds of the object of relinquishment of the path of seeing and the path of meditation. So the tradition here is to interpret these statements pertaining to how such a path is a path of seeing or a path of meditation, how they eliminate the objects of relinquishment together with their seeds, and how, at the end of these two paths, one attains the arhat’s state, and so on, as possessing a provisional meaning. This is analogous to the following. For example, one might allow the Mind Only school’s negation of indivisible atom and external objects composed from aggregation of such atoms, as well as its negation of a subject that possesses a substance different from such object, to be established by means of valid cognition. Furthermore, one might allow that if a trainee who is tamed by such an approach were to cultivate familiarity over a long period of time with the truth he had perceived, he will come to have direct insight and that what is seen would be made familiar. However, [the Mind Only school’s statements about] how, on such a basis, one traverses the ten grounds and the remaining three last stages of the path will be interpreted as provisional by the Middle Way school. [43]

Although one meditates on the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, it is the realization of the no-self of person as defined earlier that is accepted [by the other schools] to be the actual path that frees one from the afflictions. The *Compendium of Trainings*, for example, explains how it is the mentation (*vid byed*) of no-self that eliminates the afflictions while the remaining characteristics are means for thorough

purification of the afflictions.⁷⁵ In consonant with this, the *Exposition of Valid Cognition* too states:

It's through the view of emptiness one is freed;
The remaining meditations are for its sake.⁷⁶

Confused by the words “the view of emptiness” [in the above citation], even some Indians assert this to refer to the view realizing suchness. This is, however, not the meaning. Here, it refers to the view realizing the person to be devoid of self-sufficient substantial existence. Although such a path cannot eliminate the seed of afflictions, it can temporarily help cease manifest levels of afflictions. For instance, if we have to accept that, as has been stated, the path assuming the aspect of tranquility and coarseness, which is common with the non-Buddhists, eliminates the manifest levels of afflictions belonging to up to below the Peak of Existence, what need is there to speak of the ability of the path referred to earlier in temporarily eliminating the manifest levels of afflictions. The afflictions being referred to in the context of the phrase “temporarily eliminating the manifest levels” are, however, the afflictions that possess [specific] objects and aspects as described in the two Abhidharma systems. As for the grasping at true existence, which is described in this [Candrakīrti] system as a form of an afflicted ignorance, and the afflictions defined from such a standpoint consisting both of views and non-views – which are different from those explained in the Abhidharma system – as for these, even their manifest levels cannot be eliminated [by that path]. In contrast, although the manifest levels of afflictions of the Peak of Existence cannot be eliminated by [the path] that assumes the aspects of tranquility and coarseness, they can be eliminated through cultivating familiarity with the realization of the coarse level of no-self of person as defined earlier.

With these, I have clearly presented the commentary's statements that how the paths that are claimed to be an antidote against the afflictions but are divorced of the realization of suchness are similar to the path that assume the aspects of tranquility and coarseness and, like that of the non-Buddhists, how they cannot eliminate all the afflictions.⁷⁷

b' Demonstrating how this is the position of the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

This [standpoint] is accepted also the great bodhisattva Śāntideva. [44] In his *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* one reads:

It's through seeing the truths one is freed;
What need is there then to see emptiness?⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Asaṅga, *Abhidharmasammucaya*; Toh 4049, Tengyur, sems tsam *ri*, 58a:2.

⁷⁶ Dharmakīrti, *Pramāṇavārttika*, *Pramāṇasiddhi*: 254; Toh 4210, Tengyur, tshad ma *ce*, 117a:6.

⁷⁷ *MABh*, 226b:6.

⁷⁸ Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 9:40ab; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 32a:7. In these two lines, Śāntideva anticipates an argument from the Buddhist essentialists against the very need to realize emptiness.

In response to this argument “Since it is through the path seeing the four noble truths and their sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, that one becomes free from the afflictions, so for the purpose of ceasing the afflictions it is not necessary therefore to see emptiness,” one reads:

For in the scriptures it’s stated
That without this path there is no awakening.⁷⁹

Śāntideva states here that without this path of seeing the emptiness of intrinsic existence there is no attainment of any of the three awakenings. How this is stated [in the scriptures] is as found in the great commentary on the *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* where a citation is made from the mother [*Perfection of Wisdom*] sutras. There it states how for those who harbor recognitions of real entities there is no liberation and how from the stream-enter up to the self-enlightened ones of all three times, these states are attained through the perfection of wisdom alone.⁸⁰ So taking [this last line] to refer only to the unexcelled awakening is not the meaning.

Next, with the four lines beginning with the line “Since the monk is the root of the doctrine,”⁸¹ it presents also how a path that is infected with the objective focus of the mind grasping at true existence does lead to attainment of nirvāṇa. Then one reads:

If through elimination of the afflictions one is freed,
It should then happen immediately afterwards.⁸²

The line “If through elimination of afflictions one is freed” presents the opponent’s position. The meaning of this line should be explained just as in the context of the line “It’s through seeing the truth one is freed,” in terms of [the argument] if one eliminates the afflictions and attains freedom on the basis of meditating on the path of the four noble truths and their sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence. This is so because the debate here is whether or not freedom from the afflictions is attained through the path of the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, alone. This is also clearly evident from the argument [of the line] “It’s through seeing the truths ...” Therefore, the interpretation – whereby, accepting that through the path of sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, alone one can cease the afflictions, still this path cannot lead to freedom from all the suffering – this is definitely not the meaning of [the text] here. The correct intended meaning is, therefore, the following. Now, if those afflictions that are defined in common with the two disciple schools cease to manifestly operate temporarily in the mental continuum of someone who had generated the path described earlier, and if this is characterized as attaining freedom from the afflictions, one then refutes this [standpoint] with the objection that immediately following the temporary elimination of merely the manifest levels of afflictions one would attain the freedom that is marked by the cessation of all the pollutants. [45] That this cannot be accepted is stated in the following:

⁷⁹ *BCA*, 9:40cd.

⁸⁰ Prajñākaramati, *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjika*, Toh 3872, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 217a:4.

⁸¹ *BCA*, 9:44; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 32b:2.

⁸² *BCA*, 9:45; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 32b:3.

Though they possess no afflictions
One sees in them the potency of karma.⁸³

These lines state how, although they possess no manifest levels of afflictions, one can see in them, because of their karma, the potency to propel future births.

These texts should be explained in the terms presented here. Some [Indian] commentaries as well as some Tibetans interpret these in terms of how, although Mogaliputra, Noble Aṅgulimāla and so on do not possess the afflictions, one sees how the fruition of their karma accumulated when they were ordinary beings brings forth suffering, they do not immediately become free. We should not make the same [mistake]. Here, it is not the potency to produce suffering within this lifetime that is the issue; rather, the issue is the potency of the karma to propel future births, and because it is this that has not ceased there is no freedom. This is how the texts should be presented. Again, it states:

The mind divorced of emptiness,
Though ceased will arise again;
Just like the absorption of non-perception.⁸⁴

The meaning of these lines is this. If one is divorced of the realization of emptiness, through practicing other paths even though the afflicted mind may cease for a while, it has not been brought to a permanent end. Therefore, the afflictions will arise in a manifest manner once again thus one's revolving in the cycle of existence due to the power of karma still remains unceased. The explanation here of the occurrence of temporary stoppage of afflicted mind is, as explained earlier, refers to the occurrence of the temporary elimination of the manifest levels of afflictions. In response to the line, "One sees the potency of karma," one reads:

If one asserts "It is certain that they've
No craving that leads to appropriation,"⁸⁵

[If it is asserted] "Since craving that appropriates future birth is brought to an end by that path, it is certain that they do not obtain future births due to the power of karma." In response to this, one reads:

Though this craving is not afflicted,
Like ignorance, why does it not exist?⁸⁶

Here [Śāntideva] states, "Just as the opponent accepts within ignorance two types – one afflicted in the sense defined in the Abhidharma and one that is not – why cannot he also

⁸³ *BCA*, 9:45; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 32b:3.

⁸⁴ *BCA*, 9:48; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 32b:4. This is a meditative state of deep absorption wherein all the manifest levels of perception and discriminations have ceased. For a comparative study of the meditative states such as this, which entail states of mindlessness, in the Theravada, Sarvastivada and Yogacara traditions, see Paul Griffiths (198*).

⁸⁵ *BCA*, 9:46ab; 32b:3.

⁸⁶ *BCA*, 9:46cd; 32b:4.

accept, with respect to craving, one that is afflicted in the sense defined in the Abhidharma and one that is not?" This indicates that there exists a form of craving that is not afflicted in the sense understood according to the two [disciple] schools and the Mahāyāna in common. This, however, does not suggest that such a craving is not accepted in one's own tradition to be afflicted. [46] Therefore, although they may have temporarily eliminated the manifest level of craving brought forth by grasping at selfhood in terms of the person as self-sufficient substantial existence, the question is raised as to why would they do not possess a form of craving brought forth by the egoistic view grasping at the person as existing by virtue of its own nature? Therefore, for someone who has eliminated the manifest levels in the manner described earlier, even the manifest levels of egoistic view and craving do not come to an end.

Now, it is the case in both these two traditions that when the manifest levels of afflictions are eliminated, in both the traditions, the roots are not eliminated. So, if no difference found in terms of the presence or absence of its manifest level, there would then be no point in differentiating within the forms of craving. Then it states:

Conditioned by feeling, there is craving;
Feeling too remains present in them;⁸⁷

These lines present the reason why craving will not come to end in those who have eliminated the manifest levels of afflictions on the basis of some other paths. This is because if one is divorced of the view realizing suchness, he will not eliminate, even to a slight degree, the ignorance grasping at true existence of feelings. In that case, why would the craving longing not be separated arise when pleasurable feelings and the craving long to be separated when painful feelings not arise in him? For the effect will come into being with certainty from a cause wherein all the conditions are fully present and obstacles are no more. As for how, according to our own position, craving for feeling comes to an end, this is as presented in the following in *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*:

When there is no one to feel at all,
And when there is no feelings as well,
At that point, seeing this situation,
Why would craving not come to an end?⁸⁸

These lines explain how when one comes to be familiar in seeing that nothing, one who feels as well the feeling itself, exists by virtue of intrinsic nature, craving will come to an end. Therefore, these lines also indicate how, if one lacks such a path why should all the forms of craving come to an end at all. This is also the meaning of what is stated in the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* in the following:

In those whose minds that possess a locus,
Why would the grave poison of afflictions not arise?⁸⁹

⁸⁷ BCA, 9:47ab; 34b:4

⁸⁸ BCA, 9:99; 34b:4.

⁸⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Yuktiśaṣṭikākārikā*, 52ab; Toh 3825, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, 22a:7.

To this statement about the presence of craving on the ground that feeling persists, Chapa and Tsek Wangchuk Sengé objects to this asserting that this is not good for one cannot prove the existence of an effect on the basis of the existence of its cause. In this way they refute the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.⁹⁰ They did so because, of the two positions on the question of whether or not the realization of the no-self of phenomena exists in the disciples and self-enlightened ones, the latter standpoint was more widely known in Tibet and people were, therefore, more familiar with that position. Furthermore, because they have not comprehensively studied the scriptural sources and the reasoning of the first standpoint, they have failed to acquire in detail the significance of the most profound reasoning. [47] Thus presuming to hold the highly learned ones as flawed is a serious error. Similarly, there appeared to have been some Tibetans who have leveled criticisms against Candrakīrti.⁹¹ Here too, by leveling gratuitous objections while failing to carefully understand the opponent's position, they are betraying their own true nature, which, if seen by the learned ones, will appear to be only a source of deep embarrassment.

This being so, the *Explanation of the Commentary's* distinction that the path of sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, can eliminate the intellectually acquired afflictions but not the innate ones, too becomes incorrect.⁹² For insofar as the temporary elimination of mere manifest levels of afflictions as known commonly to the vehicles, this is the same for both the intellectually acquired and the innate, and with regard to not eliminating the seed, it is the same for both as well. So, here [Jayānanda] appeared to have failed to understand how to explain the intentions of Candrakīrti and Śāntideva as being the same. Now, if one has not realized the aggregates to be devoid of true existence, one will not realize the person to be devoid of true existence. In that case, one will not have realized the no-self of person. For example, just as the emptiness of true existence of aggregates and so on is posited to be the no-self of phenomena, likewise, the absence of true existence of person must also be posited to be the no-self of person. The reasons are exactly the same in all possible terms. Therefore, since grasping at true existence of person must be posited as grasping at self-existence of person, until this is extinguished the cessation of all afflictions cannot come about, and that the grasping at true existence of person and phenomena must be taken to be and affliction. In Śāntideva's tradition too, we will have to posit this very standpoint.

2' Presenting the sources that substantiate this point

This has two parts:

⁹⁰ See, for example, Chapa Chökyi Sengé's (1109-69) *Summary of the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (spyod 'jug bsdus don), pp.131-45.

⁹¹ Chapa Chökyi Sengé was perhaps the most vocal Tibetan critic of Candrakīrti. Being an upholder of the tradition of what is known as the "three eastern masters of Svātantrika" (*rnag rgyud shar gsum*) – these being Jñānagarbha, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla – Chapa subjected Candrakīrti's interpretation of Nāgārjuna's teaching on emptiness to sustained criticism. Most famously, he threw a series of consequences against Candrakīrti. These can be found in his *A Thousand Doses in One on the Middle Way of the Three Eastern Masters* (*dbu ma shar gsum stong thun*), pp.58-76.

⁹² Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatāraṭikā*, 21a:1.

- a' Citing substantiations from the Mahāyāna sūtras
- b' Citing substantiations from the treatises and Lesser Vehicle sūtras

a' *Citing substantiations from the Mahāyāna sūtras*

Questions of Sitharādhyāśaya Sūtra, as cited in the *Clear Words*, states the following:

“For example, when the music of a magician is heard, some, seeing a woman conjured by the magician, experience lustful thoughts. His mind driven by desire, he becomes wary of his companions and feeling embarrassed, he gets up from his seat and walks away. Now, having gone away if were to contemplate that woman as unattractive, as transient, as dissatisfying and as empty and devoid of selfhood, O child of the lineage, what would you think of this? Is this person proceeding in the perfect way or is he proceeding in a distorted way?” [48]

“Blessed One, when there is no such woman, the striving of that person contemplating her as unattractive, as transient, as dissatisfying, and as empty and devoid of selfhood is a distortion.”

The Blessed One responded: “Here too, O Child of the lineage, you should view those monks, nuns as well as some upasakas and upasakis who contemplate phenomena that are unborn and unoriginated as unattractive, as transient, as dissatisfying, and as empty and devoid of selfhood to be likewise. I do not say that these ignorant ones are practicing on the path, for they are to be referred as proceeding with distortion.”⁹³

Thus, a clear statement is found. Here, a parallel is made between someone grasping a illusory woman as an actual woman and contemplating her impermanence and so on upon her and someone grasping at the aggregates to be real and contemplating upon such aggregates as impermanent and so on. There are instances where one takes real aggregates as one's object of focus and contemplates upon its impermanence and so on. This is of course the simple case of a distorted state of mind that is erroneous with respect its object of apprehension and is, therefore, not established by valid cognition. However, within the mental continuum of a person who has not yet eradicated the object of apprehension of grasping at true existence, there can be numerous instances where he takes the aggregates without any qualification of them as true or false as his object and establishes their impermanence and so on by means of valid cognition, again without qualifying these in either of the two terms. And when engages in their meditative practice as well, by meditating upon these facts, the paths will arise in his mental continuum just as described earlier.

Again, the *Concealing the Concentrations Sūtra*, as cited in the *Clear Words*, states:

⁹³ *Sthirādhyāśayaparivarta*; Toh 224, Kangyur, mdo sde dza, 165b:3, which is cited in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapāda*, chapter 1; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma 'a, 14b:5.

Mañjuśrī, as they do not see the truths perfectly as they are, the sentient beings whose minds have become erroneous through the four distortions will not transcend this imperfect cycle of existence.⁹⁴

To this, Mañjuśrī responds with the appeal “O Blessed One, pray reveal us what is it that the perceiving of which prevents the sentient beings from transcending cyclic existence.” Thus, in response to the Teacher’s statement that it is through not understanding perfectly the four truths exactly as they are that beings fail to transcend cyclic existence, [49] Mañjuśrī asks, “Do tell us what is that object and in what manner of perceiving it that prevents the beings from transcending cyclic existence.” In reply, it states that if one meditates on impermanence and so on with the thought “I shall transcend cyclic existence” and “I shall attain nirvāṇa,” conceptualizing these in a manner of clinging to their real existence, then with the thoughts “I have understood suffering,” “I have eliminated its origins,” “I have actualized the cessation,” and “I have cultivated the path,” will arise and he will come to think “I have become an arhat.” So when he succeeds in temporarily eliminating the manifest levels of afflictions, as discussed earlier, the thought will arise in him that all pollutants have now come to cease. However, at the time of his death when he sees that he is going to take a rebirth, he comes engender doubts towards the Buddha, and as a damaging consequence of this, it is stated, he will be reborn in the great hells. This is so for only few who are abiding on such a path and does not apply to all.

Next, when Mañjuśrī enquires “How does one realize the four noble truths?” he is asking here what has been stated earlier, that is that one must realize the four truths perfectly as they are. In response, [the sūtra] states:

O Mañjuśrī, he who sees all mental formations are unborn recognizes suffering thoroughly. He who sees all things as not coming into being has eliminated all its origins. He who sees all phenomena as permanently transcending beyond sorrow has actualized cessation. He who sees all phenomena as utterly unborn has cultivated the path.⁹⁵

In this way, the sūtra explains how through this path one transcends beyond sorrow without any grasping. This presents extremely clearly how it is seeing the four truths as devoid of intrinsic existence that frees one from cyclic existence, and how the path not divorced from grasping at true existence does not transcend cyclic existence. It explains, therefore, how the path of the four truths and their sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, alone cannot eliminate the seeds of afflictions and, how, to in order to eliminate these it is necessary to realize and meditate on the meaning of *the way things really are*. If one fails to differentiate these points properly, one might hold that the disciples possess merely the path meditating upon the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence and assert that a Noble disciple and an Arhat disciple do not qualify as real Noble One and a real arhat. [50] In this way, one might accumulate grave negative

⁹⁴ *Prasannapāda*, chapter 24; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 171b:5

⁹⁵ Cited in *Prasannapāda*, chapter 24; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 171b:2. Candrakīrti cites it from the *Sūtra Demonstrating All Phenomena to be Non-Entering* (*chos thams cad ‘jug pa med par bstan pa’I mdo*), a sūtra not found in the Kangyur.

karma of denigrating the Noble Ones. And if the one who utters such things possesses the bodhisattva vow, he will accrue root infraction as well. For example, *Compendium of Trainings* states:

“The vehicle of the trainees does not
Eliminate attachment and so on,” one holds
And make others hold the same.⁹⁶

Here it is stated to be a root infraction.

This point is stated also clearly in *Diamond Cutter Sūtra*:

Subhuti, what do you think of this? Does the stream-enterer have the thought “I have attained the fruit of stream-enterer”?
Subbhuti replied, “O Blessed One, this is not so.”
“Why is this so?”
“Blessed One, because does not enter anywhere. Hence he is called the ‘stream-enterer.’”⁹⁷

And:

“Blessed One, if this stream-enterer were to harbor the thought ‘I have attained the fruit of stream-enterer,’ this in itself would constitute grasping at selfhood, grasping at a sentient being, grasping at life force and grasping at personhood.”⁹⁸

Similar statements are made with relation to the remaining three abiding in the fruit as well.⁹⁹ The statement that, if one grasps at the one who has attained the stream-enterer’s ground as well as the attained fruit as real and engenders the thought “I have attained stream-enterer” this would constitute grasping at his self-existence, suggests that the grasping at the true existence of the two – the person and the fruit – to be grasping at self-existence. Of these the first is a grasping at self-existence of person while the second is a grasping at self-existence of phenomena. The statement that the stream-enterer does not apprehend with the thought “I have attained the fruit” on the basis of grasping at true existence is made from the point of view of someone who has not eradicated the object of apprehension of grasping at true existence. It does not indicate, however, that he has no innate grasping as well.¹⁰⁰ On the basis of this [explanation] one should understand subsequent [similar] statements as well.

⁹⁶ Śāntideva, *Śikṣasāmmucaya*; Toh 3940, Tengyur, dbu ma *khi*, 43b:1.

⁹⁷ *Vajraccedikā*; Toh 16, Kangyur, shes phyin *ka*, 123b:6.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 124a:1.

⁹⁹ The three are abiding in the fruits of once-returned, never-returned and arhat. Together, these four fruits are known as the “four fruits of the disciple path” (*nyan thos kyi ‘bras bu bzhi*).

¹⁰⁰ What Tsongkhapa is stating here is this. When the *Diamond Cutter Sūtra* states that the stream-enterer does not apprehend with the thought “I have attained the fruit,” it is stating that the stream-enterer does not relate to his attainment on the basis of not having eradicated the object of apprehension of grasping at true existence. In other words, the stream-enterer relates to his attainment with the realization of its emptiness. However, this does not mean that the stream-enterer no longer possesses any innate levels of grasping at true existence, which will be eliminated only when he attains the state of arhat.

Although some Svātantrika-Madhyamaka masters interpret the meaning of this [*Diamond Cutter*] citation differently, Prajñākaramati quotes this to substantiate the point that in order to traverse to the awakening of the disciple and self-enlightened ones one must realize emptiness, which is excellent.¹⁰¹ So these scriptural citations clearly indicate how if one is divorced of the view of suchness one will not become free from cyclic existence, and how such a view is essential to gain freedom from cyclic existence. [51] That the disciple and self-enlightened arhats are not free from the bondage of cyclic existence is something no learned person would assert, nor is such a position tenable. Therefore, that the realization of the absence of intrinsic existence of phenomena is present in the disciples and self-enlightened ones has been demonstrated very clearly. There are many more scriptural sources, such as the great mother [*Perfection of Wisdom*] sūtras. Fearing for length, however, I have not written about these here.

b' Citing substantiations from the treatises and Lesser Vehicle sūtras

The *Precious Garland* states:

So long there is grasping at the aggregates,
So long there is grasping at “I.”
When there is “I” grasping there is action;
And from this in turn comes birth.

With three courses with no beginning, end and middle,
This round of cyclic existence resembles
A ring of fire; thus with one causing the other,
Beings revolve in this cycle of existence.

Since this is not to be found at all
In both self and others, and even in the three times,
Grasping at “I” will come to cease;
From this, action and birth as well.¹⁰²

The first lines of this citation indicate how so long as there is grasping at true existence of the aggregates the egoistic view grasping at “I am” will be. By doing so it demonstrates how in order to cease the egoistic view entirely grasping at the true existence of the aggregates must cease. From this we can understand that even the disciple and self-enlightened arhats have completely eliminated grasping at the true existence of the aggregates. This being so, until the object of apprehension of grasping at true existence is not eradicated, the object of apprehension of the egoistic view will not be eradicated. Thus we come to know that the no-self of person as commonly understood by the schools of the Lesser and the Great Vehicles constitutes the negation of only the coarse level of selfhood of person, and that this is not the subtle no-self of person. There are some who accept that the position of this master [Candrakīrti] is similar to that of the other schools

¹⁰¹ Prajñākaramati, *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjika*, Toh 3872, Tengyur, dbu ma la, 223b:2. *This note should be added to the critical edition.

¹⁰² Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 1:35-37; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 108b:5

insofar as the manner in which the disciples and self-enlightened ones realize the no-self of person and assert that he differs from the others on the question of whether or not the disciples and self-enlightened ones realize the no-self of phenomena. They have failed to comprehend well the position of this master. For it has been stated in the commentary that for someone who is divorced of the view of suchness there is no realization of the no-self of person as well.

Then, the next two lines indicate how because of the presence of the egoistic view, due to its force, one will accumulate karma and how from this, because of the power of karma, one will take birth in the cycle of existence. This is so because of not having eradicated the object of apprehension of grasping at true existence of the aggregates; not simply because there exists in him, in general, the egoistic view. [52] For example, although egoistic view persists up until the seventh ground, from the first ground onwards one does not take birth due to the power of karma.

Now, since these texts demonstrate how if one is divorced of the meditative practice of the view of suchness one cannot bring about the cessation of egoistic view, they indicate that if one possesses only the path of the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, there is no possibility of eliminating the afflictions. Therefore, inasmuch as [Candrakīrti] is making a unique presentation of the no-self of person, if he were to leave intact the presentation of the afflictions, such as the identification of the egoistic view, developed on the basis of the common-level no-self of person, he will fall into the grave error of failing to comprehensively draw out [the implications of] that unique tenet. Yet, how can it be possible that this sovereign among the learned ones is mistaken? Therefore, those who follow after this master yet fail to comprehend that Candrakīrti is instituting the tradition that explains that the disciples and self-enlightened ones possess realization of the no-self of phenomena, those in whom, not even the thought has arisen as to whether or not there exists in the presentation of the afflictions a unique perspective, theirs is merely a faith in this tradition. Illustrated by this there appear to be numerous other points, these you should carefully enquire into.

“The three courses” refer to the three thoroughly afflicted factors of afflictions, karma and birth. That there is no beginning, no end or no middle to these three is so because from the afflictions arise karma, from this arise the sufferings and, from the sufferings arise its own kinds as well as the afflictions. Since each produces the other and vice versa, there is no fixed sequence, in other words they mutually cause and effects. This dependent origination does not coming into being from both self and other, and it does not obtain arising by means of intrinsic nature – that is seen not to arise or not seen to arise – in any of the three times. And due to the reason that the egoistic view has ceased one’s revolving in the cycle of existence is overturned. Following this, at the end of establishing the aggregates, elements, and so on, as devoid of intrinsic existence, it reads:

Thus just as with this perfect truth,
Knowing that beings too lack reference,
So, like a fire that is bereft of fuel,
With no locus, nothing to grasp, one transcends.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ *RV*, 4:65; 120b:4.

Thus it is explained how, seeing the truth of suchness, one transcends beyond sorrow. If one contends “This seeing is spoken of here in the context of the bodhisattvas alone,” [53] that this has been stated in the context of the disciples and self-enlightened ones is evident from the fact that, immediately following the phrase “one transcends,” one reads:

Thus the bodhisattvas too will see
And affirm their awakening, I maintain.
However, because of his compassion
He will take birth until his awakening.¹⁰⁴

The texts of the *Precious Garland* cited in the commentary are from an early translation and not very good.

In a sūtra taught to the disciples too, in order to eliminate their obscuration of the afflictions, the following is stated:

Form is like a mass of foams;
Feeling is like a water bubble;
Perception is like a mirage;
Mental formations are like plantain trees;
Consciousness is like an illusion;
So taught Suryamitra.¹⁰⁵

Thus, by means of five similes, the conditioned things were analyzed as being devoid of intrinsic existence. The distinction that *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* draws between how the Teacher taught the disciples the five aggregates and how forms and so on resemble the five similes like a mass of foam was taught to the bodhisattvas is meant to be understood in relation to the disciples who are, for the time being, not capable of realizing suchness. It is not meant to apply to all the disciples. For in this same text, the following is stated:

Those who do not understand emptiness
Are not receptive vehicle for liberation;
Such ignorant beings will revolve
In the existence prison of six class of beings.¹⁰⁶

With respect to this fact of how the absence of intrinsic existence of phenomena is presented in the lesser vehicle sutras, the *Precious Garland* states:

¹⁰⁴ *RV*, 4:66; 120b:4.

¹⁰⁵ *Dharmasaṃgītisūtra*, Toh 238 Kangyur, mdo sde, zha, 39b2. This exact citation can also be found in *Samyutta Nikāya*, part III, 95(3), (translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000, p. 952.) Candrakīrti cites this in his commentary, which probably is Tsongkhapa’s source.

¹⁰⁶ Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, 72; Tengyur, rgyud ‘grel ngi, 41a:3. An English translation of the entire text of Nāgārjuna’s *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* can be found at www.tibetanclassics.org/Jinpa_Translation.html

In the Great Vehicle non-arising is taught;
Other's "cessation" is emptiness;
Since annihilation and non-arising are
The same in meaning one should bear it.¹⁰⁷

Here, Nāgārjuna states that in the Mahāyāna sūtras non-arising by virtue of intrinsic nature is taught to be emptiness, while in the other – that is the Lesser Vehicle sūtras – when emptiness is taught, the annihilation of conditioned things is taught. Since the two are similar in their significance of teaching emptiness, Nāgārjuna states, one need not be intolerant of the teaching of emptiness in Mahāyāna.

On this question of the sameness of these two in terms of their significance, some explain this in the following. If the followers of the disciple schools accept cessation with respect to things, since annihilation is untenable if intrinsic nature exists, so if one accepts annihilation one ought to accept, right from the start, the absence of intrinsic existence as well. Therefore, these two share the same meaning.¹⁰⁸

This interpretation is totally incorrect. [54] For in that case, with respect any phenomena that the Middle Way school accepts as existent, such as shoots and so on, since the same reason applies, there will be the absurd consequence that all phenomena, such as shoots, would share the same meaning as emptiness. In the *Commentary on the Precious Garland* there is the statement "There is no objective difference at all between non-arising and momentariness,"¹⁰⁹ this too is an explanation that betrays a lack of understanding the meaning of the text.

A Lesser Vehicle sūtra cited in the *Commentary on the Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* one reads:

That which is the total elimination of this suffering, a definite elimination, purification, annihilation, attachment-free, a cessation, well pacified, a dissolution, where no additional suffering is lead to, this non-origination and non-arising is peace, this is the highest bliss. It is thus. For this is the definite elimination of all the aggregates, it is the annihilation of existence, it is free from attachment, it is the highest bliss and transcendence from sorrow.¹¹⁰

In explaining the meaning of this citation, since there is the demonstrative particle "this," which is a term of proximity, Candrakīrti explains that by keeping the suffering or aggregates that are part of our present continuum alone in mind, the statement from "total elimination" up to "dissolved" is made, and with future suffering alone in mind, the statement "no additional suffering is lead to" up to "transcendence beyond sorrow" is made. One might contend "the term 'this suffering or aggregates' can be applied to the afflictions too, which is an instantiation of these two, so here a generic term is being used to refer to a particular." This too is unsustainable. For if a generic term cannot be explained in terms the universal, it then needs to be interpreted in terms of a particular.

¹⁰⁷ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 4:86; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 121b:1.

¹⁰⁸ Here, once again, Tsongkhapa is critiquing Jayānanda's reading as found in his *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā* (Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma ra, 75b:7).

¹⁰⁹ Ajitamitra, *Ratnāvalīṭīkā*; Toh 4159, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 161a:7.

¹¹⁰ Cited in Candrakīrti, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvr̥tti*; Toh 3864, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 10a:5.

Here, however, it can be explained in terms of a generic term. Interpreted thus, according to the Buddhist essentialists, one cannot explain, as stated in the following line in *Sublime Continuum* “The afflictions are annihilated primordially,”¹¹¹ the aggregates to be primordially annihilated on the ground that they are primordially devoid of arising by means of an intrinsic nature. So it will have to be explained in terms of a total elimination through the path. However, at that point when what is actualized, the nirvaṇa, is present the one who actualized it will not be present; likewise, when the one who is actualizing it is present, since the aggregates have not come to an end, there will be no nirvaṇa that is to be actualized. Thus one will not be able to explain the meaning of this sūtra. [55]

According to us, however, the “annihilation” here refers not to an annihilation brought about through an antidote. Rather, this can be explained in terms of the statement “It’s called annihilation for it is primordially annihilated.”¹¹² We are, therefore, able to explain the meaning of this sūtra well. Thus in the sūtra this kind of annihilation has been explained in terms of which the cessation of suffering, that is nirvaṇa, is taught. Noble Nāgārjuna states how this shares the same meaning as the teaching [presented elsewhere] of the cessation in terms of the absence of arising by means of intrinsic nature. Since there appear to be many who have not understood this point I have explained this in some detail.

The *Fundamental Wisdom* too states:

The Blessed One who knows
Entities and absence of entities has,
In his *Advice to Katyāna* negated
Existence, non-existence, and both as well.¹¹³

This statement too indicates how in the Lesser Vehicle sūtras the negation of the two extremes has been taught. This sūtra appears to be in the *Collected Discourses*.¹¹⁴

These are only few examples. There are many lines in the *Precious Garland* that are not cited here; in the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* and in the collection of hymns as well, Nāgārjuna makes many [similar] statements.

3’ *Repudiating the objections against this presentation*

This has two parts:

- a’ Repudiating the objections mentioned in the commentary
- b’ Repudiating the objections not mentioned there

a’ Repudiating the objections mentioned in the commentary

Here, the commentary states:

¹¹¹ Maitreya, *Ratnagotravibhaga*, 1:15; Toh 4024, Tengyur, sems tsam *phi*, 55b:3.

¹¹² * Check for source.

¹¹³ *MMK*, 15:7; Toh 3824, Tengyur, dbu ma *tsa*, 9a:1.

¹¹⁴ This is most probably the text in Kangyur entitled *Vinayakṣudrakavastu* (Toh 6, Kangyur, ‘dul ba *tha*).

There are some who feel that if no-self of phenomena is taught in the disciple's vehicle, there will then be no purpose for teaching the great vehicle. I understand their standpoint to be contrary to reason and the scriptures.¹¹⁵

Here, the opponent is Bhāvaviveka. For example, he objects to Buddhapalita's explanation in the commentary on the seventh chapter [of *Fundamental Wisdom*], where Buddhapalita expounds the meaning of the statements found in the Lesser Vehicle sūtras about all phenomena as being devoid of selfhood in terms of their being devoid of intrinsic existence.¹¹⁶ Bhāvaviveka refutes this in his *Lamp of Wisdom* on the ground that, if this so, there will then be no purpose for teaching the great vehicle.¹¹⁷

To [explore this further]: Are you, Bhāvaviveka, saying that the teaching of great vehicle will then have no purpose in general? Or are you saying that the teaching of no-self of phenomena in the great vehicle will then have no purpose? If it is the first, and if there is a logical entailment here, then the teaching of great vehicle will be reduced to only the teaching of no-self of phenomena. This, however, cannot be the case. For in the great vehicle the grounds of the bodhisattva, the deeds of the perfections such as giving, aspirational prayers and expansive dedications, great compassion and so on, the grave waves of the two accumulations, the most excellent potencies of the bodhisattvas – [56] phenomena that are inconceivable by ordinary beings as well as the disciples and self-enlightened ones – these have been taught. For example, the *Precious Garland* states:

In the vehicle of the disciples,
The bodhisattva's aspirational prayers,
Their deeds and dedications are not taught;
So how can they become bodhisattvas?

The facts of abiding in the bodhisattva deeds,
These are not taught in their sūtras;
That they are taught in the great vehicle,
This, the learned ones should uphold.¹¹⁸

This was stated to help remove the misconception that, since on the basis of the path presented in the baskets of the Lesser Vehicle alone one could traverse to Buddhahood there is thus no need for another vehicle, namely the Mahāyāna. According to you, Nāgārjuna should have said here that because in the great vehicle no-self of phenomena is taught so what is taught in the Lesser Vehicle texts remains inadequate. Instead of this, however, he stated that other dimensions [of the path], namely the vast aspect, has been taught.

Now, if it is the second position, here too there is no logical entailment at all. For in the baskets of the disciple no-self of phenomena is taught only briefly while in the great vehicle no-self of phenomena is taught most extensively through numerous

¹¹⁵ *MABh*, 227b:5.

¹¹⁶ *Buddhapalita*, chapter 7; Toh 3842, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, 198a:2.

¹¹⁷ *Prajñādhīpa*, chapter 7; Toh 3853, Tengyur, dbu ma tsha, 123b:3.

¹¹⁸ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 4:*; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge,*

avenues. This is indeed the view of the Noble One. For example, the *Hymn to the World Transcendent* states:

Without realizing signlessness
There is no liberation, you've declared.
So you presented this [signlessness]
In its entirety in the Great Vehicle.¹¹⁹

The first two lines of this stanza show how since there is no possibility of annihilation of the afflictions without realizing signlessness, there is thus, without it, no possibility of attaining liberation. The line “you’ve declared” indicates how in the Great Vehicle the signlessness, that is no-self of phenomena, has been taught in its completeness or in its entirety. From this one discerns how no-self of phenomena is not taught in its entirety in the Lesser Vehicle. One might wonder, “Now, how does the line ‘So you presented this...’ serve as the reason for it having been taught in its entirety [in the Great Vehicle]?” Since without realizing signlessness one cannot attain liberation that marks the annihilation of the afflictions, so even in the baskets of the disciple no-self of phenomena has to be taught. And given that there has to be a difference between the Lesser and the Great Vehicles as well, this is explained by the line “So you presented this [signlessness].”

These [analyses] reveal how both the objection and the contrary consequence thrown are invalid in that they lack any logical entailment. Therefore, these [objections of Bhāvaviveka] are contrary to reason. That they are contrary to the scriptures has already been explained numerous times earlier. [57]

One might then ask: “What then is the meaning of this master’s statements pertaining to whether or not no-self of phenomena is taught in its entirety in the baskets of the Lesser Vehicle and the Great Vehicles, and whether or not one meditates on no-self of phenomena in its entirety on the paths of these two vehicles?” This is definitely not to be understood in terms of the assertion that the practitioner of the Great Vehicle possesses the realization of entire knowable world as devoid of intrinsic existence; in contrast, the disciples and self-enlightened ones lack this and realize only a part or some of the knowable world as devoid of intrinsic existence. For when one has established by means of valid cognition no-self of phenomena on one established base, then when he enquires in relation to other bases as to whether or not they possess true existence, he will be able to, on the basis of his previous reasoning, realize them as devoid of true existence. Among those who claim to be proponents of the Middle Way school, there are some who assert emptiness of true existence to be truly existent, taking this to be the standpoint wherein the entities has been negated to be truly existent; there are others who assert the ultimate reality to be an affirmation, which is independent and truly existent. Of these two, the former appears to suffer from the flaw of not having identified well the

¹¹⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Lokatistava*, 25; Toh 1120, Tengyur, bstod tshogs ka, 64b:3. The first line of this stanza in the Dergé Tengyur edition appears as “Without entering signlessness,” *mtshan ma med la ma 'jug par*. However, the version of the stanza cited in Candrakīrti’s commentary (*MABh*) accords with the one found here in Tsongkhapa’s text. An English translation of this hymn by Nāgārjuna can be found at www.tibetanclassics.org/Jinpa_Translations.html as well as in Lindtner (198*)

criteria of true existence and have so negated something that is only a rough approximation. The latter, though pretending to refute real entities, does not appear to have negated it by means of valid cognition; moreover this appears to be a view that denigrates the [conditioned] entities. There isn't much [in these views the critique of] which cannot be ascertained on the basis of these points.¹²⁰

Therefore, the practitioner of great vehicle, even when establishing a single basis as being devoid of true existence, just as presented in the *Fundamental Wisdom*, he does so through limitless varieties of reasoning and proofs. His intelligence thus comes to be greatly enhanced in relation to suchness. In contrast, the Lesser Vehicle practitioner establishes suchness by means of valid cognition on the basis of an abbreviated form of reasoning. Therefore, since he does not proceed in the manner described earlier, there is no enhancing of his intelligence in relation to suchness. Therefore, such differences as elaborate and condense [application of reasoning] as well as whether or not one's meditative practice of no-self is comprehensive have been stated. The reason why there is such difference is because the disciples and the self-enlightened ones strive to eliminate the afflictions alone, while the practitioners of Great Vehicle strive with emphasis to eliminate the obscuration to knowledge, for which it is necessary to have one's intelligence greatly enhanced on the basis of having one's wisdom developed with respect to suchness.

b' Repudiating the objections not mentioned the commentary

If this is so, how does one interpret the following lines of the *Ornament of Clear Realization*, where it is stated that although the path of the self-enlightened ones can eliminate the conception cling to true existence in relation to the held objects, it cannot eliminate clinging to true existence with respect to the apprehending subjects?

Because they've eliminated the conception of held objects,
Because they've not eliminated the conception of apprehending subjects,
Know that within this basis are encompassed
Perfectly the path of the rhinoceros-like.¹²¹ [58]

Again:

Because that of afflictions, knowable and the three paths
Are undermined, there are the purities
Of the disciple, of the rhinoceros, and of the bodhisattvas.¹²²

Here, clinging to true existence in relation to the held objects is described as an obscuration to knowledge. How does one interpret these statements?

¹²⁰ *de dag gis ma nges pa med do/*

¹²¹ Maitreya, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, 2:8; Toh 3786, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 5a:4.

¹²² Ibid., 2:29; Toh 3786, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 6a:2. In Maitreya's text, the purities that one attains on the paths of the disciple, the self-enlightened one, and the bodhisattva are characterized distinctly in terms of three categories of obscuration – the afflictions, the obscuration to knowledge, and the obscurations pertaining to the knowledge of the paths of the three vehicles.

Now, as for the meaning of eliminating clinging to true existence of external objects, this can be only be one of the following possibilities: One is that, while external objects are established by means of valid cognition true existence of external objects is negated by reason. So, establishing this in the manner of the Middle Way school, one mediates upon this truth and comes to eliminate clinging to true existence. Alternatively, just like the Mind Only school, one meditates on the fact of the negation of external objects by means of reasoning, and on that basis, eliminates apprehension of the existence of external objects. Now, if it is the first option, this is unsustainable. For if it is the case that, while able to posit external reality in general, its true existence is negated through reasoning into suchness, in that case, the instant he enquires as to whether or not the subject too possesses true existence, he should be able to realize it to be devoid of true existence on the basis of the power of the previous reasoning. This is stated by Āryadeva in the following:

He who sees the suchness of one thing,
He shall see the suchness of all things.¹²³

Accepting the second option is the position of the commentarial tradition of master Haribhadra and others like him. In this view, the absence of external reality is [seen as being] established by valid cognition. Now, once the non-existence of external reality is established, then the subject that apprehends it do not exists a separate substance from such an object will be established anyone, no matter how dull his mental faculty might be. So not eliminating clinging to true existence of the subject should be understood in terms of subscribing to consciousness as being truly existent in general. It is definitely not a case where one half of the separatedness of object and subject in terms of their substance has been negated while the other half is held to be truly existent. So those who remark, “It is astonishing that the philosophical standpoints of the self-enlightened ones that propound the true existence of subject and the Consciousness Only school that propounds consciousness devoid of subject-object duality to be the ultimate, this is but an object of laughter and reveals something of themselves.

Here [in the *Ornament of Clear Realization*], in demonstrating the self-enlightened one’s path as the medium level vehicle, a differentiation is spoken of in terms of whether or not one has eliminated the clinging to true existence with respect to object and subject. And it is on the basis of these two, because they are superior to the disciples yet inferior to the Great Vehicle, it is the medium. This is because, on this view, the persons of the three vehicles – lesser, medium and great – are respectively of inferior, middling and greater mental faculties [59] – a hierarchy of mental faculties is posited in relation to no-self. Thus highest view of the Middle Way school is correlated with the great vehicle, the middling view of the Mind Only is correlated with the middle vehicle, and, for the small vehicle, the lowest view of the common-level meaning of no-self of person is posited. However, this is not invariably so. Even according to the standpoint that accepts the presence of the view of suchness in all three vehicles, there is no contradiction in there being three levels of mental faculties in terms of whether or not one penetrates the view of suchness swiftly and so on.

¹²³ *Catuhśastakārikā*, 8:16; Toh 3846, dbu ma *tsha*, 9b:6.

Since it presents the inability to eliminate clinging to true existence of the subject as the inferior feature [of the path of the self-enlightened ones], the view of no-self taught in the *Ornament of Clear Realization* cannot be described, like in the *Ornament of Mahayana Sūtras* and the two *Differentiations*,¹²⁴ as being that of the Mind Only standpoint. Even with respect to the *Ornament of Clear Realization* itself, there were approaches even in India of interpreting it according to the Middle Way and the Mind Only, and there is the need to discuss many of their reasons. However, fearing that this might result in excessive length, I have not written about this here for the time being.

Again, [in the *Ornament of Clear Realization*] there is the following, which states that even amongst the disciples and self-enlightened ones, there is the realization of no-self of phenomena:

Because no differentiations exist in the ultimate expanse,
The separateness of lineages cannot be sustained;
Due to the particularities of the supported properties
The distinctions of this reality are spoken of.¹²⁵

With respect to phrase “the ultimate expanse,” the *Light of the Twenty Thousand Lines* states:

“Conceptualization” and “thorough conceptualization” refer to manifest clinging to the entities and their signs. Since it is devoid of this one should understand this to be the absence of attachment itself. This non existence itself is thatness of all phenomena. Therefore, it is stated here that because it is the ultimate expanse itself that is the cause of qualities of the Noble Ones, the *naturally abiding lineage* is the basis of cultivation.¹²⁶

Thus it is defined in terms of the emptiness of true existence, which is the non-existence as grasped at by the attachment clinging to true existence of entities and their signs. Then an objection is raised: “If the ultimate expanse is the lineage, all sentient beings would be abiding in the lineage because, in general, the ultimate expanse resides in all.”¹²⁷ Here, the abiding in the lineage is understood in terms of the lineage in the context of abiding on the path. In response, it is stated that since we speak of it as being the lineage in that when one focuses on it the qualities of the Noble Ones comes to enhance, no such absurd consequence follows. So it is not the case that the mere presence of the ultimate expanse entails abiding in the lineage in the context of the path. [60] Rather the meaning is that when the path takes suchness as its object and meditates upon it, and when it becomes

¹²⁴ “Two differentiations” refer to Maitreya’s *Clear Differentiation of the Middle and Extremes* (*Mdhyāntavibhanga*) and the *Clear Differentiation of Reality and Reality Itself* (*Dharmadharmatāvibhanga*). In the Tibetan textual tradition, these two classical Indian works are listed as part of what are called the “Five Teachings of Maitreya,” the remaining three being *Ornament of Clear Realization* (*Abhisamayālaṃkāra*), *Ornament of Mahāyāna Sūtras* (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*), and *The Sublime Continuum* (*Ratnagotravibhaga*).

¹²⁵ Maitreya, *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, 1:40; Toh 3786, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 3b:2.

¹²⁶ Muktisena, *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikavṛtti*; Toh 3787, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 59b:1.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 59b:6.

thereby a special cause for the qualities of the Noble Ones, it is then posited to be a special kind of lineage. Though this is so, in response to the objection, “Since there is no differentiation in the ultimate expanse the separateness of the lineages of the three vehicles cannot be sustained,” it is explained that it is on the basis of the distinct supported properties – namely the paths that takes the lineage as its object – distinct lineages are spoken of.¹²⁸

Here, “support” refers to the object of focus while “supported” is that which focuses. Within that which focuses, there are the two vehicles of disciple and self-enlightened ones as well. Now, to take suchness as its object suchness must be present within the perspective of that cognition and, without negating true existence within the perspective of that cognition the emptiness of true existence simply cannot be established in that mind. If that is not established, suchness will not be established within the perspective that cognition. This, in turn, needs to be ascertained first in relation to a given basis. So this [stanza in the *Ornament of Clear Realization*] indicates that, even amongst the disciples and self-enlightened ones, there are those who, on the basis of focusing on external and internal objects, perceive their suchness, namely their absence of true existence. Understood thus, there exist among the self-enlightened ones those who realize the truth of suchness. Therefore it is not necessarily the case that all self-enlightened ones are incapable of eliminating clinging to true existence in relation to consciousness. With respect to the disciples too, [on this view] since we need to distinguish between two types, that is one who has realized suchness and one who has not, even in the *Ornament of Clear Realizations* two kinds of practitioners of Lesser Vehicle have been described. Therefore, with respect to grasping at true existence of substantial separatedness of object and subject, we must definitely accept two kinds – one that is an obstruction to knowledge and one that is not.

If one thinks that the argument here is not that the distinctness of the lineages of the three vehicles becomes unsustainable, rather it is an argument about how the division into the thirteen lineages is untenable. This too is incorrect. For example, the *Light of the Twenty Thousand Lines* states:

This is like this statement [in the sūtra]: “So Mañjuśrī, if there is one ultimate expanse, one suchness, one perfect reality limit, how can such labels as ‘receptacle’ and ‘non-receptacle’ be applied to this?”¹²⁹

Here, in the sūtra a question is raised on how does one, given that there exists no differentiation in the ultimate expanse, determine who is a receptacle of the Great Vehicle and who is not a receptacle. This is similar to the [question raised earlier]. So the debate is about the unsustainability of the separate lineages of the Great and Lesser Vehicles; for if it is interpreted in terms of the thirteen lineages, the objection about whether someone is the receptacle or a non-receptacle cannot be raised. The great master Haribhadra too upholds a standpoint consonant with that of Noble Muktisena. Likewise, in the root text and the commentary of the *Sublime Continuum* too, there are many statements pertaining

¹²⁸ Ibid., 59a:6.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 60b:1.

to both that the disciples and self-enlightened ones realize ultimate reality and that they do not. [61] Fearing of length, for the time being, I have not written about these here.

That there are these two perspectives is due to the following reason. In the *Ornament of Clear Realization* the *knowledge of the path* pertaining to the paths of the disciple and self-enlightened ones is presentation, which is for the purpose of sustaining those who share the lineage of the disciples and self-enlightened ones. And among the practitioners of the Lesser Vehicle there are two categories – those who are receptacle of profound [emptiness] and those who are not become such receptacles. Of these two it is the latter that is in the majority so their paths have been presented most. Just as one finds among the followers of Mahāyāna those who do not find the view of the Middle Way unless they are led first through the Mind Only, likewise there are some among the self-enlightened ones, and this seems to be true also for the disciples. Furthermore, in both the *Light of the Twenty Thousand Lines* and extensive commentary on the *Eight Thousand Lines*, to substantiate that the ultimate expanse is posited to be the lineage of the all three vehicles, they cite that statement that all the Noble persons are defined in terms of the unconditioned alone.¹³⁰ In the *Diamond Cutter* this statement “Because the Noble beings are defined in terms of the unconditioned alone”¹³¹ is presented as a substantiation of the statement, “The qualities of the buddha and all the teachings he has revealed are not to be found.” The meaning of this [statement] is to explain that all the Noble beings of the Lesser and the Great Vehicles are defined on the basis of actualizing the unconditioned, the ultimate truth, which is non-existence of all phenomena by virtue of their own reality. Therefore the two – this tradition [of Candrakīrti] and the standpoint of the *Ornament of Clear Realization* are not in contradiction. So, even in the tradition of these commentators of the *Ornament*, we should understand that there are two perspectives. I could elaborate further.

(3) *Presenting the quality that is preeminent on the first ground*

This has four parts:

- (a) Explaining generosity of the one abiding on the first ground
- (b) Explaining generosity of the lower stations
- (c) Explaining generosity of the bodhisattvas
- (d) Presenting the divisions of the perfection of generosity

(a) *Explaining generosity of the one abiding on the first ground*

**At this point for him the cause of full awakening,
[The perfection of] generosity comes to be preeminent first.
Being devoted even to give away his own flesh,
[Giving] becomes a sign to infer imperceptible [realizations].**

¹³⁰ Muktisena, *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikaprajñāpāramitavṛtti*; Toh 3787, Tengyur, shes phyin ka, 60a:4; and Haribhadra, *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitavyākhyā*; Toh 3791, Tengyur, shes phyin cha, 48a:1.

¹³¹ *Vajraccedikasūtra*; Toh 16, Kangyur, shes phyin, sna tshogs ka, 123a:5.

At that point when the ground of Perfect Joy is attained, of the ten perfections it is the perfection of giving alone that comes to be preeminent for that bodhisattva. [62] It is not, however, that he does not possess the other perfections. This supramundane perfection of giving is also the first cause of full awakening, which, of course, is understood in terms of the supramundane level of giving. In general, although it is the subsequent perfection that is superior compared to the preceding one, the reason why here the giving is described to be the preeminent is because the extent to which the power to practice giving excels on this level does not exist for ethical discipline and so on. On the first ground, the bodhisattva is capable of engaging in such acts of giving as giving away his body and external belongings without the slightest occurrence of the attachment of possessiveness that contradict the perfection of generosity. He is, however, not capable of engaging in ethical discipline in the manner of never engaging, even in dreams, in immoral acts, which are the contrary forces of ethical discipline, the he will be able to on the second ground. Furthermore, on this ground realizations that remain imperceptible can be inferred through his generosity. For example, not only is the bodhisattva devoted to giving away external belongings, he becomes devoted even more to giving away even his own flesh. So his generosity becomes a proof by which one can infer his inner realizations, such as his attainments, that remain imperceptible to many others. This is analogous to inferring the presence of fire on the basis of smoke and so on. This stanza presents how he is free of any taints of possessiveness in relation to giving away his body, life and material resources. Even though he gives these away, his mental state remains steadfast without wavering in any way.

(b) Explaining generosity of the lower stations

This is twofold:

- (i) Explaining how, through generosity, happiness of cyclic existence is attained
- (ii) Explaining how, through generosity, happiness of nirvāṇa is attained

(i) Explaining how, through generosity, happiness of cyclic existence is attained

**All these beings manifestly yearn for happiness;
The happiness of humans do not arise without the resources;
Since material resources come about from giving,
Knowing this the Sage uttered the discourse on giving first.**

**Even those weak in compassion who possess hostile heart,
Those who pursue their own welfare with dedication,
For these too as for the aspired for material resources,
They come about from giving, causing the suffering to be pacified.**

All these beings yearn manifestly for happiness that rectifies such sufferings [63] as that of hunger, thirst, sickness, heat and cold. These forms of happiness of the humans and others do not arise without utilizing the resources that are the objects of desire, such as food, drinks, the cures against sickness, the clothes, as well as shelters. So, knowing that

these resources, in turn, come about from the accumulation of merit born of giving in the past, the Sage, who perceives the minds of all beings, thus engaged in the discourse of generosity first. Also, engaging in this means is easier.

One might wonder, “In order to obtain excellent material resources through the act of giving is it necessary for the giver to be in perfect accord [with the criterion of a true giving]?” This is not necessary. For example, one should respect even the act of giving of someone who, like a merchant that desires a greater mass of wealth on the basis of parting only a small portion of his wealth, wishes to have greater wealth compared to the beggar that seeks material resources. Such a giver is unlike the bodhisattvas who are, being under the sway of compassion, do not aspire for the fruits of giving but simply give on the basis of celebrating the joy that is the wish to give. Such a giver is not only weak in compassion some may even possess a heart that is harsh towards the sentient beings; he may dedicate himself purely towards his own happiness of the higher realms in that he may take this pursuit to be of utmost importance. Even from the giving of such people – a form of giving that has achieved a heightened sense of bearing only the positive quality that is the expectation of the fruit of giving, which is the opposite of possessiveness that prevents from giving away one’s material resources – even from such a giving wonderful and excellent material wealth do come about. In this way, it can become a cause for relieving the suffering of hunger, thirst and so on.¹³²

(ii) Explaining how, through generosity, happiness of nirvaṇa is attained

**When engaged in [perfection of giving] at one point
He too shall soon meet with the Noble beings;
Then cutting the continuity of cyclic existence perfectly,
As its result he will travel to the tranquil state.**

Even for him who, being divorced of compassion, is devoted to giving on the condition of fulfilling his own happiness of rectifying personal suffering, since it is stated “The sublime ones walk in the presence of those who give,”¹³³ [64] because of his situation of giving, one day he will soon meet with the fortune of encountering a Noble one. Then, on the basis of such a sublime being’s teaching of Dharma to him, he will come to perceive the cycle of existence to be bereft of positive qualities. He shall then, actualizing the uncontaminated path of the Noble Ones, come to eliminate ignorance thus perfectly severing the continuity of cyclic existence – that is the continuity of birth and death since beginningless time. Thus, as a result of meeting with the sublime one he will travel to the tranquil state of disciple’s nirvaṇa or that of the self-enlightened ones.

(c) Explaining generosity of the bodhisattvas

This has four parts:

¹³² Since Tsongkhapa is here paraphrasing the text of Candrakīrti’s commentary, the sentences of the Tibetan text are quite cumbersome. The point being made is this. Even the act of giving done from a self-centered motive, where the key concern is for oneself to enjoy the fruits of giving, this leads to the benefits of enjoying excellent material wealth and so on.

¹³³ This phrase is most probably from a sūtra and is cited in Candrakīrti’s commentary. However, both he and Tsongkhapa do not identify its source.

- (i) The unique benefits of the bodhisattva's generosity
- (ii) Showing how the discourse on generosity is primary for both practitioners
- (iii) What kinds of joy are found when the bodhisattva engages in generosity
- (iv) Whether there is suffering or not when the bodhisattva gives away his body

(i) *The unique benefits of the bodhisattva's generosity*

**Those with the mind pledged to help the beings,
Before long they find joy because of their giving.**

The non-bodhisattvas do not definitely enjoy the happiness which is the fruit of their generosity immediately after the act, simultaneous to the recipient being satisfied through that giving. So, because they do not directly see the fruits of their giving, it is possible that they might not engage in generosity. In contrast, the bodhisattvas who possess the mind that has pledged to help all sentient beings in the long run and to bring about their happiness in the immediate term, they shall obtain supreme joy as a fruit of their giving, seeing how, before long their giving brings satisfaction to the recipients. In the immediate aftermath of this, because they enjoy the fruits of their giving, they will take delight in giving throughout all times.

(ii) *Showing how discourse on generosity is primary for both practitioners*

**Since [it's crucial] for both the compassionate and one who is not,
So [for both] it's this tale of giving that is primary.**

[65] Since, as explained earlier, it is generosity that brings forth all the happiness of birth in the higher realms as well as that of *definite goodness* of all beings, the bodhisattvas who are embodiments of compassion and [the ordinary people] who are not such embodiments of compassion, this discourse on generosity is primary in that it is most important. The *Friendly Letter* states:

Knowing wealth to be fluctuating and devoid of essence,
Pray give righteously to the monks,
To the brahmans, to the hungry, and to your friends;
There is no greater friend than giving on the other shore.¹³⁴

(iii) *What kinds of joy are found when the bodhisattva engages in giving*

**The happiness that occurs for a bodhisattva from
Simply hearing and think of the sound "please give me,"
If such bliss does arise for sages in their tranquility,
What need is there speak of giving away everything?**

¹³⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Sukhrellā*, 6; Toh 4182, Tengyur, spring yig nge, 41a:1.

“What kind of extraordinary joy arises in the bodhisattva when the recipients are satisfied through material resources, the very cause that underlies the bodhisattva’s dedication to the act of giving?” When the bodhisattva reflects on the content of the words “please give me” that he has heard, with the thought “they are asking something from me,” a sense of happiness comes about repeatedly in the heart of the bodhisattva. Such an extent of happiness is not generated by the arhat sages as they enter into the state of tranquility – the expanse of nirvaṇa. If this is so, what need is there to speak of how by giving away everything, both internal and external, and satisfying the recipient in such a manner that this will engender happiness greater than that of the bliss of tranquility? There is no need to speak of this at all. When one’s mind is attracted towards the bliss of tranquility one becomes diverted from other’s welfare; in contrast, when one’s mind is attracted towards the happiness of the bodhisattvas as described earlier this leads to even greater efforts in pursuing the welfare of others. So, these two are different.

(iv) *Whether there is suffering or not when the bodhisattva gives away his body*

**Through the pain of cutting off from his body and giving it away,
They see the pains of others, such as their birth in the hells,
As if he himself is undergoing such experiences,
Swiftly he shall strive with effort to cut from [his own flesh].**

[66] “Now, in such a bodhisattva, who gives away his outer and inner belongings- who has been described as engendering excellent bliss on the basis of giving – does he experience physical suffering or not?” If the question relates to the great being that have attained the ground, then, like the cutting of inanimate objects, he experiences no physical pain. The *Meditative Absorption of Noble Gaganagañja* states:

It is thus. For example, if there is a great forest of *sāla* trees, where some people appeared and cut a *sāla* tree. The remaining *sāla* trees would not feel attachment or aversion, or conceptualization or thorough conceptualization towards them with the thought “That tree has been cut, we haven’t been cut yet.” So the bodhisattva’s forbearance that resembles this, which is a thoroughly trained forbearance, is most excellent and is equal to space.¹³⁵

The *Precious Garland* too states:

He has no physical suffering;
So how can he have mental pain?
Through compassion he feels the world’s pain;
Because of this he remains for long.¹³⁶

This too is intended from the point of view one who has attained the grounds.

If the question is posed from the point of view of one who has not attained the Perfect Joy ground – a ground totally free from the attachment of possessiveness to one’s

¹³⁵ *Āryāganagañjaparipṛcchā*; Toh 148, Kangyur, mdo sde pa, 257a:1.

¹³⁶ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 3:27; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 115b:2.

body and material resources – undoubtedly, there is physical suffering since he is encountering conditions that are adverse to the sustenance of his body. Nonetheless, even on such occasions, because of that suffering, he will abide in conditions that will lead him even more to engage in the welfare of the sentient beings. When the bodhisattva looks at those who are trapped in the unbearable states of existence in the hells, as animals, as hungry ghosts, and so on, whose bodies are being consumed by intense suffering without interruption – suffering that is thousand-fold more unbearable compared to the pain of cutting from the bodhisattva’s own body – he will disregard his own suffering caused from cutting off from his body and giving it away. Taking his own experience of suffering as the basis, he will swiftly initiate efforts to sever the sufferings of others, such as [their birth in the] hells. In Naktsö’s translation this stanza appears in the following:

Through the pain of cutting off and giving away his body, [67]
He views other sufferings, such as those of the hells,
And on the basis of what he has experienced,
He will strive with effort to sever [the suffering of others].

Thus, [the above] is an explanation that draws from two different versions of translation of this stanza.

So, it is only when one possesses this kind of power of will that one gives away one’s body. And since there is no contradiction in the appearance of such a will even prior to the attainment of the grounds, it is stated that even those [bodhisattvas] who have not yet attained the grounds give away their body.

(d) Presenting the divisions of the perfection of generosity

**Giving that is devoid of the given, the recipient and the giver;
This is called a supramundane perfection.
When attachment arises for these three elements,
It is called a mundane perfection.**

With respect to such generosity, namely the intention to give, when it is sustained by the uncontaminated wisdom of the emptiness of perceiving truly existent that which is *given*, the *recipient* and the *giver*, this is referred to as “supramundane perfection.” So it is stated in the great mother *Perfection of Wisdom*.¹³⁷ Because the meditative equipoise of the Noble One that perceives no object is supramundane, a giving sustained by this is characterized as supramundane perfection as well. In contrast, a giving that is not sustained by such objectless [wisdom] is a mundane perfection. The clear differentiation between these two cannot be ascertained directly by those who have not attained the grounds of ultimate awakening mind.

¹³⁷ See, for example, *Āryadaśasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā*, chapter 9; Toh 11, Kangyur, shes phyin, shes rab khri pa *nga*, 96b:1.

The term “beyond”¹³⁸ refers to the Buddhahood which represents total elimination of the two obscurations, thus lying beyond the shores or entries of the ocean of cyclic existence. “To reach beyond” is to have gone beyond. In explaining [the etymology of] this term, the commentary states:

The defining [grammatical] rule, “If there is a subsequent term, do not make it invisible,” makes the accusative case to be not invisible in that it assumes a form. Alternatively, because it is “*Prīṣo da ra* and so on,” it is characterized as possessing a suffix.¹³⁹

Paṇḍita Jayānanda explains this statement in the following:

In Indian language, “beyond” is *pāra* while “to go” is *itā*, and when these two words are combined the accusative singular *am* is added onto *pāra*, while the particle *su* of nominative case is added after *itā* [thus deriving the compound] *pāra ma itā*. When [the word is] combined as *paramitā*, although *am* and *su* should become invisible, here through the rule ‘If there is a subsequent term, do not make it invisible’ the word *su* from the root word is made invisible [68] yet *am* is not made so. “Through this rule the accusative case...” refers [therefore] to the accusative singular *am*. As this word is not made invisible the term it assumes the linguistic form *pāramitā*. In “*Prīṣo da ra* and so on,” is the word *pārama* for it is a word with *ma* as a suffix so it is read as *pārama*. So it is stated ‘do not make it invisible.’ Thus by erasing *a* of *am* and leaving *ma* intact and giving it [the vowel] *i*, it becomes *mitā*. This is how it is being explained.¹⁴⁰

The nominative ending *su* seems to be incorrect, so check if this is *si* instead.¹⁴¹

Some Tibetans assert that from the Sanskrit word *pāramitā* the bindu (dot) of *ra* is placed alongside on the same row which then results in *pāramaitā*; and when combination rule is applied to this, the vowel *i* is given to the letter *ma* and when the vowel *a* is erased it assumes the form *mitā*. There appear to be many confused

¹³⁸ Here, Tsongkhapa is providing the etymology of the Sanskrit term *pāramitā*, literally “to go beyond” or “to have gone beyond,” which is translated by the English word “perfection.” Hence the “perfection of generosity” for *danapāramitā* and “perfection of wisdom” for *prajñāpāramitā*.

¹³⁹ *MABh*, 230a:5. This passage deals with points of Sanskrit grammar rules that dictate how the forms of the words should be modified when creating compound words. In explaining how the two terms *dānasya* (“of generosity,” that is the term *dāna* in its genitive form) and *pāramitā* (perfection) are combined into the single compound term *dānapāramitā*, Candrakīrti invokes here two different Sanskrit grammar rules. The first rule he invokes justifies the retention of the accusative form *am* in the word *pāramitā*, although the genitive ending *sya* of the word *dānasya* (of generosity) is removed when creating the compound word. The second rule Candrakīrti invokes, which Jamyang Shepa (*Critical Analysis of Entering the Middle Way*, p.137a:3) identifies to be from the well-known Sanskrit grammar *Paṇḍi*, justifies this retention on an aesthetic ground. Jamyang Shepa (pp.136a:5-38b:1) provides a detailed analysis of how these two grammatical rules invoked by Candrakīrti in his commentary account for the formation of the compound word *dānapāramitā*, “perfection of generosity.”

¹⁴⁰ Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatārikā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma *ra*, 85a:5.

¹⁴¹ Tsongkhapa is here referring to Jāyānda’s explanation of how the compound word *pāramitā* (perfection or literally ‘to have gone beyond’) is formed through the combination of the two words *pārama* (beyond) and *itā* (gone).

explanations such as this. However, the explanation of the paṇḍita which I have cited earlier alone is excellent.

The two lines “Giving that is devoid of the given, the recipient...” and so on takes the wisdom realizing the three spheres to be unperceived as the point of reference and indicates how generosity sustained by it to be an instance of the perfection of generosity. Other [instances of perfection], such as generosity, which are not sustained by this wisdom are, given that they are similar to those perfections sustained by wisdom, referred to also as perfections. For example, even though [an instance of giving] may not be sustained by wisdom, because it is sustained by dedication to the great awakening, it is accepted as being certain to go beyond. So it will acquire the name “perfection of giving.”

Thus, with respect to the etymological meaning of the word “perfection” (*pāramitā*), if it is read as “going beyond to this state,” namely in terms of an accusative case, the word refers to having gone to ground of the buddha; if the word is read as “going beyond by means of this,” namely in terms of the instrumental case, the perfections exist even on the learner’s path. With this explanation given in relation to generosity, you should understand that in the case of ethical disciple and so on too there are both kinds – one sustained by awakening mind and dedication and one by wisdom as well.

If one becomes attached to the three spheres of giving, that is to say if one is fettered through engendering clinging to true existence of the three, this generosity is described in the sutras as a mundane perfection.¹⁴²

As to the question of how to implement into practice right from this present moment what have been explained, it is thus. With respect to giving away our body to others [69] and in generating extraordinary joy [in doing so], we should train in these by taking them as objects of imaginative visualization. As for other forms of generosity, such as the giving of material things, we should cultivate these in relation to the fields of giving, both the elevated and the lowly, on a regular basis through such acts as offering even [a simple thing like] water. During these occasions we should ensure to be sustained by the wisdom realizing the three spheres to be not perceptible as objects. Mentally we should give away repeatedly our body, material resources and the roots of virtue for the benefit of the sentient beings. We should contemplate how, even if we do not give them away, as they will come to perish we will have to discard them anyway. We should contemplate how, since they will have to be given up anyway, that it would be superior if we have mentally given them away before. We should proceed in the manner described in the following in *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*:

My body and my material resources,
And roots of virtue of all three times –
I shall give these away with no reserve,
To fulfill the wishes of all beings.¹⁴³

And:

¹⁴² See note # 137.

¹⁴³ *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 3:10; Toh 3871 Tengyur, dbu ma, la, 7a:2.

By giving away everything one transcends sorrow;
My mind seeks this transcendence of sorrow;
Since everything must be given up anyway,
To give these to sentient beings is most excellent.¹⁴⁴

iii) *Conclusion by means of describing the benefits of the ground*

**Thus that which abides perfectly in the bodhisattva's mind,
And brings forth light thus making it find beauty,
Like the water crystal jewel [of moon] this joy
Dispels the entire thick darkness and remains victorious.**

Now to present the qualities of this Perfect Joy ground, just as described earlier, briefly by means of the qualification of uncontaminated wisdom. This Perfect Joy ground abides like the water-crystal jewel, namely the moon. There are three points of similarities with the moon. First, that it resides at a high point in that it abides in the mind of the bodhisattva on the first ground, who has attained the qualities of the ground described earlier. As such, it resides at a high point on the path and therefore resembles the moon residing at a high point in the sky. Since the first ground is a facet of the mind of that bodhisattva one speaks of residing in it. This is like, for example, the eyes residing in the head. [70] The ultimate awakening mind of the first ground brings the light of gnosis to the mind of the person thereby making it find beauty. This resembles the moon making its space, the skies, beautiful through its bright illumination. Also, as the first ground abides victorious over the objects of abandonment pertaining to the path of seeing, this resembles the moon residing with having cleared all elements of the thick or dense darkness [of the night].

This, then, is the thorough exposition of the first ground of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Intent: An Extensive Exposition of "Entering the Middle Way."*

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 3:11.

PART II
SECOND TO THE FIFTH GROUND

Second Ground: The Stainless

b) SECOND GROUND, THE STAINLESS [71]

This has five sections:

- i) How on this ground ethical discipline is completely purified
- ii) The praises of ethical discipline
- iii) The analogy for not being mixed with the opposing forces of ethical discipline
- iv) The divisions of the perfection of ethical discipline
- v) Conclusion by means of expressing the qualities of the ground

The first has four parts:

- (1) How ethical discipline is perfected on this ground
- (2) How on this basis the qualities become completely purified
- (3) How ethical discipline becomes superior compared to the first ground
- (4) Other conditions that purify ethical discipline

(1) How ethical discipline is perfected on this ground

**He is endowed with perfect qualities of ethical discipline;
Even in dream he discards the stain of immorality; 1ab**

The bodhisattva who is abiding on the second ground, because he is endowed with the perfect factors of ethical discipline as well as the qualities in their purity, not only during his waking period, but even in his dreams he shall discard the stain of immorality, that is he shall remain untouched by it. This includes, not just the immorality consisting of root infractions and the naturally reprehensible deeds, he shall relinquish also the stains of the immorality consisting of the violation of prescribed rules as well.¹⁴⁵ Because he does not encourage the afflictions that give rise to immorality, and because the non-virtuous karma of transgressing proscribed rules do not occur for him, he has attained the coolness borne of having extinguished the fire of remorse stemming from accruing downfalls of violating prescribed rules. It is therefore called *śīla*, ethical discipline. The Sanskrit term for ethical

¹⁴⁵ This distinction between immorality consisting of “naturally reprehensible deeds” (*rang bzhin gyis kha na ma tho ba*) versus immorality consisting of “the violation of prescribed rules” (*bcas pa dang ‘gal ba’I ‘chal khrims*) is a crucial one in understanding Buddhist ethics. The morality pertaining to restraining from the naturally reprehensible deeds – these include those acts that are by their very nature harmful to others, such as killing, stealing, adultery, and so on – is binding for all who wish to live a moral life. In contrast, the morality pertaining to restraining from violation of prescribed rules is applicable only to those who have explicitly chosen to take a vow consisting of a set of such prescriptions. For, example, although an indulgence in sexual intercourse constitutes a transgression for a monastic member, it does not entail any non-virtuous act for a lay person who has not taken the monastic vow of celibacy.

discipline is *śīla*, which [is composed of] the word *śīta*, referring to “coolness,” and the word *lati* that refers to “attain.” Alternatively, it is called “ethical discipline” (*śīla*) because, being the cause of happiness, it is something to be sought after by the sublime ones. This is an explanation of the word (*śīla*) based on its etymology.

With regard to its actual nature, [ethical discipline] is defined in terms of the seven relinquishments pertaining to the abandoning the seven immoralities of body and speech. As for non-attachment that is [the opposite] of covetousness, non-aversion that is of harmful intent, and right view that is the opposite of wrong view, these are the underlying states of mind that give rise to the seven relinquishments. So, if these motivating factors are included, [ethical discipline] consists of the ten relinquishments consisting of positive courses of action that dispense with the ten negative courses of action. [72]

(2) *How, on this basis, the qualities become purified*

**Since the movements of his body, speech and mind are purified,
He accumulates all ten courses of excellent actions. 1cd**

Again, in what manner of enjoying the perfect factors do the qualities of this bodhisattva come to be purified? Because the movements or the threefold activity of his body, speech and mind remains cleansed from even the subtle downfalls throughout all periods of waking and dream states, he accumulates, without exception, all ten sublime or supreme courses of action. To accumulate [all ten courses] means to complete the first three courses of action, such as relinquishing killing, through his body, the four middle ones through his speech and the three last courses through his mind.¹⁴⁶ In pursuing this not only does the bodhisattva refrain from [transgressing] the boundaries of prescriptions of omission, he also accomplishes all the aspects of prescriptions of commission pertaining to ethical discipline.¹⁴⁷

(3) *How ethical discipline becomes superior to the first ground*

**With regard to this virtuous path in all ten [courses]
He becomes excelled and purified.
So pure and pristine like the autumn moon,**

¹⁴⁶ In commenting on these two lines of the root text, Candrakīrti provides in his commentary a lengthy citation from the *Ten Grounds Sūtra*, enumerating each of the ten non-virtuous actions and how the bodhisattva relinquishes any involvement in any of these acts through his body, speech and mind.

¹⁴⁷ Tib. *dgag bcas* and *sgrub bcas* This distinction between the prescriptions of omission and commission correlate to moral injunctions *against* certain acts versus injunctions *for* certain acts. In other words, they correspond to the Buddhist equivalents of “Thou shall not” and “Thou shall” injunctions. Typically, in Buddhism, the practice of ethical discipline moves from the basic level of refraining from the standard ten unwholesome actions – killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct, the three bodily actions; telling lies, divisive speech, harsh speech, and senseless gossip; the four verbal actions; and covetousness, harmful intent and harboring wrong views, the three mental actions – to more advanced ethical disciplines that involve increasingly greater number of prescriptions, including those of commission as well. The bodhisattva ethics is an example of one such advanced ethical discipline. For a detailed presentation of bodhisattva ethics in English, based on Tsongkhapa’s commentary on the chapter on ethics from Asaṅga’s *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, see Mark Tatz, *Asaṅga’s Chapter on Ethics With the Commentary of Tsongkhapa*.

He is thoroughly adorned with peace, radiance and alike. 2

One might ask: “Are not these ten courses of action not accumulated in their entirety by the bodhisattva on the first ground as well?” Yes, they do accumulate them. However, to the extent that the second ground bodhisattva excels in purifying all ten such virtuous courses of actions, namely that he is utterly excellent in this, to that extent the bodhisattva on the first ground is not so. Because he already possesses optimally the superior [perfection of] generosity described in the context of first ground, and since out of the remaining nine perfections he does not possess the excellence in the practices pertaining to forbearance and so on to the extent he has in the case of ethical discipline, ethical discipline is described as being preeminent here. It is not that the other perfections are not present. The reference to the ten virtues is to serve as an illustration for the prescription of ethical discipline pertaining to these [courses of action], so we must include here all prescriptive boundaries of ethical discipline. [73]

Just as the autumn moon possesses the twin qualities of cooling the scorching pain of heat and abiding resplendent with a white halo of light, likewise the bodhisattva who always abides in utterly pure ethical discipline – the one who abides in such pure morality – is adorned beautifully with the tranquility of guarding the doors of his senses and with a radiant body that glows with light.

(4) Other conditions that purify ethical discipline

**Should that, pure in discipline, views it intrinsically real,
Because of this he will be pure in ethical discipline;
So with respect to all three [spheres of act]
Always will he remain free of the flow of dualistic thoughts. 3**

Even though a fully ordained monk may be especially pure in their ethical discipline with respect to their individual liberation vows, if he does not relinquish the viewing of phenomena as existing by virtue of their intrinsic nature, because of this reason this monk shall not be pure in ethical discipline. He will be like a morally degenerate who acts as if he is endowed with ethical discipline. *The Stacked Jewels* sutra states:

Kaśyapa, now here, some ordained monks who are endowed with ethical discipline, who are restrained by individual liberation vows and abide in them, whose rites and sphere of conduct are perfect, who views the minute reprehensible acts with a sense of fear, having correctly taken the [vows] they cultivate the bases of the training and become endowed with perfectly pure actions of body, speech and mind. Because of these, although their livelihood is perfectly pure they [still] speak of selfhood. Kaśyapa, that is the first example of a morally degenerate acting as if he is endowed with ethical discipline. ...

Kaśyapa, again here, some ordained monks, although they embrace perfectly the twelve learned qualities, they view with objectification. Thus those who abide with gasping at “I” and grasping at “mine,” O Kaśyapa, this is the

fourth example of a morally degenerate acting as if he is endowed with ethical discipline.¹⁴⁸

“To speak of selfhood” is to view with objectification. This is indicated by “abiding with grasping at ‘I’ and grasping at ‘mine.’” And its meaning should be understood in terms of common egoistic view; rather, [74] it should be understood in terms of not relinquishing grasping at “I” and “mine” as existing by virtue of their own character. Since [the demonstrative pronoun in the first line] “that” cannot be related to what has immediately preceded, the following translation by Naktsō is better:

If he sees ethical discipline to be intrinsically pure,
By this that [person] becomes morally degenerate.

Because one’s ethical discipline does not become purified if one does not relinquish the object-laden view, the bodhisattva on the second ground is perfectly free of the flow of such dualistic thoughts as constantly grasping at all three elements – the sentient beings in relation to whom immorality is to be relinquished, what relinquishing antidote is applied, and who relinquishes – in such dichotomous terms as entity and non-entity, and so on. The bodhisattva shall be free from, that is he shall relinquish, the flow of all such dualistic thoughts.

ii) THE PRAISES OF ETHICAL DISCIPLINE

This has five parts:

- (1) How enjoyment of the fruits of giving in the higher realms depend upon ethical discipline
- (2) How enjoyment of the fruits of giving through successive lives depend upon ethical discipline
- (3) How, if divorced of ethical discipline, it is extremely hard to escape the lower realms
- (4) The reason why the discourse on ethical discipline is made after the discourse on generosity
- (5) How ethical discipline is hailed as the cause of both birth in higher realms and definite goodness

(1) How enjoyment of the fruits of giving in the higher realms depend upon ethical discipline

Thus, having spoken of how the bodhisattva’s ethical discipline is endowed with perfect factors, following this, to present how, apart from this, the perfect ethical discipline is greater compared to giving in terms of its qualities and how it is the support for all perfect qualities, the following is stated:

**Wealth through giving is found even in inferior migrations;
This happens when the person loses the legs of ethical discipline; 4ab**

¹⁴⁸ *Maitreyapariṣcchānāmamahāyānasūtra*; Toh 85, Kangyur, dkon brtsegs *cha*, 142b:2.

The perfect enjoyment of extraordinary wealth that could have otherwise occurred in one's existence as a celestial being or a human as a result of engaging in the act of giving by a giver who is endowed with ethical discipline, one may [instead] come to enjoy varieties of perfect wealth when fallen into the lower realms, such as being born in the occasional hells, as cattle, as a horse, as an elephant, as a monkey, as a serpentine *naga*, and so on, or as a hungry ghost with great miraculous power. This would happen as a result of the person whose legs of ethical discipline are damaged or who is deprived of them. [75] This explains how, if one is divorced of ethical discipline, the material resources that are the fruits of one's having engaged in the act of giving, instead of ripening during one's existence as a being in the higher realm, they come to ripen during one's existence in the lower realms. Therefore, if someone wishes the fruits of his generosity to ripen during his existence in the higher realms, as referred to earlier, the person who engages in the act of giving should guard ethical discipline.

(2) How enjoyment of the fruits of generosity through successive lives depend upon ethical discipline

**Since the interests along with the capital become exhausted,
Afterwards no wealth shall come about for him; 4cd**

If divorced of ethical discipline, one will have the fruits of generosity ripened during existence in the lower realms and, in this life too, one merely experience the fruits of past acts of generosity. Due to extreme foolishness since one will not cultivate generosity and its likes anew, one will consume the capital together with its interests along with the capital, that is the root itself, and when this becomes completely exhausted, after enjoying all the fruits of past giving no wealth will come to that person. This is analogous to the following example. If, having planted few seeds, one obtains a vast quantity of crops and then plants even more seeds for the purpose of further crops. For such a man, since crops increase greatly, there is no interruption [of his fruits of labor]. In contrast, the foolish who fails to plant even some seeds but consumes [the crops], there is no uninterrupted increment of crops.

(3) How, if divorced of ethical discipline, it is extremely hard to escape the lower realms

Due to breaking one's legs of ethical discipline not only will it be hard to obtain the continuous increment of enjoyment of material resources, that one will depart to the lower realms and that it would be extremely difficult to find escape from the lower realms. This is presented in the following.

**If, when engaged in freedom and abiding with it,
One does not uphold his own status,
Falling into the abyss when he comes under other's power,
Who would raise him up from that state in future? 5**

When, like a hero who is living in a friendly place and is free of bondage, one is operating freely in accordance with one's wishes without dependence on others and is abiding in the friendly domain of celestial and human realms, [76] if such a person does not sustain himself from falling into the lower realms, then just like the hero who is bound and thrown off from a high cliff, he will fall into the abyss of the lower realms and will have to act on the dictates of others. At that time, when one has departed to the lower realms, who will then raise him up after; there is none who will do such a thing. It is extremely rare to cultivate virtues in existence in the lower realms; furthermore, since one will be extremely expedient in accumulating negative karma so one will be compelled to pass through births in the lower realms alone. Therefore, in the sutras it is stated "Even, once in a hundred eons, if one is reborn amongst the humans two types of fruitions shall occur; ..."¹⁴⁹ Thus being reborn as a human has been stated to be difficult. So right from now, we must sustain ourselves so that we do not fall into the lower realms. For this too we should know that we need to strive in ethical discipline.

(4) *The reason why the discourse on ethical discipline is made after the discourse on generosity*

**Therefore, having engaged in the discourse on giving,
The conqueror engaged in the subsequent discourse on ethical discipline;
When qualities become enhanced in the field of ethical discipline,
Enjoyment of their fruits becomes uninterrupted. 6**

Given that immorality is a source of numerous flaws, such as being lead to the lower realms, the conqueror who has defeated all negative karma engaged in the discourse on generosity in order that qualities like giving do not become wasted. Following this, he engaged in the discourse on ethical discipline, which is subsequent to or established after generosity. The reason for this is because ethical discipline alone is the field in that it is the basis of all higher qualities. So, if in this field qualities like generosity and so on were to be totally enhanced, then through an uninterrupted enhancement of the continuum of causal conditions like generosity and so on and the enjoyment of their fruits, such as body, excellent material resources and so on, the collections of their fruits will come to increase and one will be able to enjoy these for a long time. In contrast, if other [scenario were to occur], one will not be able [enjoy the enhancement of these uninterrupted fruits].

The significance of these lines is this. Those who give should not consider only the occurrence of perfect enjoyment of wealth, which is the fruit of giving, but they should also take into account the perfect form of existence in which one might enjoy such material resources, as well as take into account how to enjoy such resources throughout successive lifetimes. [77] For these sakes too, one should understand that ethical discipline is extremely important as a means.

The bodhisattvas on the beginner's stage too must strive in the acts of giving as explained earlier, and this too they must be undertake for the purpose of attaining buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings, who are the intended targets of the aspiration. Though this is so in the immediate term, however, they need to have the fruits of their generosity ripened during their existence in the higher realms and that this too

¹⁴⁹ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 190b:3.

must occur over a successive lifetimes. This in turn depends, as in the case of other [births in higher realms], upon ethical discipline. For without this, the conditions for engaging in the bodhisattva deeds will remain incomplete.

(5) *How ethical discipline is hailed as the cause of both birth in higher realms and definite goodness*

**Ordinary beings and those born of Buddha's speech,
Those whose status is confirmed with respect to self-enlightenment,
As well as the children of conquerors, as for their definite goodness
And birth in higher realms, other than ethical discipline there is no other
cause. 7**

Both the bodily existence of the higher realms as well as enjoying the fruits of generosity for a long time whilst in such existence depend upon ethical discipline, and ethical discipline is indispensable for attaining definite goodness as well. It is in this manner, as for the cause of [birth in] the higher realms for ordinary beings who have not yet entered the path, as well as the cause of the definite goodness of śravakas who are born from the Sage's speech and of those whose status is confirmed to be on the path of self-enlightenment, as well as of the bodhisattvas who are the children of the conquerors, other than ethical discipline, there is no other cause.

The meaning of this is not that ethical discipline alone is the cause and that other causes are somehow excluded, for there are numerous causes other than ethical discipline. The meaning here is rather that to achieve a special kind of birth in the higher realms as well as to achieve definite goodness [the conditions] must be definitely connected to ethical discipline; for if it is shunned these [fruits] can never be achieved. In fact, these [lines] summarizes what is stated in the *Ten Grounds Sutra*. There, in relation to each of the ten non-virtues, such as taking a life, it divides them in terms of great, middling and small degrees, which lead correspondingly to the hells, to the animal and hungry ghosts realms and, even if at the end one is born among the humans, taking a life brings forth two undesirable [effects] – brevity of life and abundance of illness – while each of the remaining nine brings about two, two undesirable [effects].¹⁵⁰ As for the ten virtues, they bring about births as, from the human and celestial beings of the desire realm up to that of the peak of existence. [78] Above this, if these ten virtues are accompanied with a median intention focusing upon one's own welfare as well as renunciation derived from fear of cyclic existence, and with no great compassion, and if these are thoroughly purified by means of wisdom realizing no-self that follows after other's words, one will definitely gain emergence through the Śravaka vehicle. Above this, if during one's last life in cyclic existence one does not depend on other's power, focuses on the awakening of self-enlightened ones, and if, without great compassion and skilful means, one comes to be purified by means of the penetration of the suchness of profound dependent origination, one will definitely gain emergence through the self-enlightened one's vehicle. Above this, if one is endowed with a loving heart or compassion that is extremely vast and limitless, if one's [path] is integrated within the

¹⁵⁰ Up to this point, Tsongkhapa is paraphrasing from *Daśabhumisūtra* (Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*) 189b:7 – 90b:4.

skilful means, if one makes great waves of aspirational prayers, if one does not forsake the sentient beings, and if one comes to be purified by focusing on the extremely expansive wisdom of the buddhas, one will totally purify the bodhisattva grounds and will achieve the vast deeds of pure perfections. Such are stated.¹⁵¹

Friendly Letter too states:

Pray cultivate ethical discipline that is undamaged,
Not low in esteem, unadulterated and untainted;
Like the earth [that supports everything] moving and stationary,¹⁵²
Discipline is taught to be the basis and support of all qualities.¹⁵³

Thus training in ethical discipline has been stated to be most important.

Though the context where they are explained may be the second ground, in terms of actual practice, there are the following that need to be undertaken even by the first ground bodhisattvas as well. With regard to the ten non-virtues, one must contemplate the critical importance of the ethical discipline of applying restraint against them, even the movement of the underlying states of mind, just as taught in the lines “*Wealth through giving is found...*” up to “*other than ethical discipline there is no other cause.*”¹⁵³ And every time one trains in ethical discipline one must do so on the basis of being sustained by wisdom that realizes with no objectification. That too, with mere intellectual understanding and familiarization over a few times will get one nowhere. So we must contemplate these points on a sustained regular basis. If one cultivates familiarity on a sustained regular basis, even with relation to the mode of engaging in the bodhisattva deeds, which, when first heard of gives rise to pain in one’s heart, and also with respect to those [deeds] that even our Teacher was not able to put into actual practice for a long period of time, even with respect to these, a time will come when one’s mind will relate to these with a sense of naturalness. [79] For example, *Praise to the One With Infinite Qualities* states:

Even when heard about this causes harm to the beings,
Those [deeds] that even you did not engage in practice for a long time,
Through familiarity, in time, these deeds came to you naturally;
So these qualities are hard to enhance without utter familiarity.¹⁵⁴

iii) THE ANALOGY FOR NOT BEING MIXED WITH THE OPPOSING FORCES OF ETHICAL DISCIPLINE

**Just as like the ocean and a corpse,
And like auspiciousness and misfortune,**

¹⁵¹ This second part of the citation is almost a direct quote from *Daśabhumisūtra* (Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*) 189b:1-5.

¹⁵² Nāgārjuna, *Sukhrellā*, 7; Toh 4182, Tengyur, spring yig *nge*, 41a:2.

¹⁵³ This is a reference to stanzas 4 – 7 of this same chapter from Candrakīrti’s root text *Entering the Middle Way*.

¹⁵⁴ dkon mchog ‘bangs, *Guṇāparyantastotra*, Toh 1155, Tengyur, stod tshogs *ka*, 198a:7.

**Likewise the great being governed by ethical discipline
Does not wish to be live with moral degeneration.**

Just as, for example, because the pristinely clean serpentine *nagas* reside there the great ocean casts ashore all the corpses with its tides thus does not remain together with the carcasses, also just as perfect factors of auspiciousness and “lady black eared,” namely misfortune, do not remain together, likewise the great being of the second ground who is governed by thoroughly pure ethical discipline would not wish to live with moral degeneration. This explanation and the statement “The home where lady auspiciousness lives there shall be, without doubt, lady black nosed as well”¹⁵⁵ found in *Commentary to the Four Hundred Stanzas* are not contradictory. There the statement is intended as referring to two persons bearing such names; here “lady black eared” is a term for misfortune.

iv) THE DIVISIONS OF THE PERFECTION OF ETHICAL DISCIPLINE

**Who relinquishes *what* and in relation to *whom* -
If there is objectification in terms of these three,
That ethical discipline is described as mundane perfection;
That which is devoid of attachment to the three is supramundane.**

If there is someone who is incapable of ceasing the seed of objectifying as real the person who relinquishes, what objects of abandonment he relinquishes, and with relation to which sentient beings he relinquishes, [80] such ethical discipline is described to be mundane perfection. If that very ethical discipline is devoid of attachment towards the three spheres objectifying them as real, that is if it is sustained by uncontaminated wisdom realizing them as objectless, it is a supramundane perfection. Hence ethical discipline has a twofold division.

v) CONCLUSION BY MEANS OF EXPRESSING THE QUALITIES OF THE GROUND

**This bodhisattva born of moon, not of cyclic existence
Yet who is its glory, free of stains, this stainlesss [one],
Just like the light of autumn moon,
He dispels the agony from the heart of beings.**

Just as the light of moon in autumn is free of obscuring taints and helps relieve people’s agony, likewise, the bodhisattva, because of being endowed with the light of ethical discipline emerging from the moon of second ground – which is free of the stains of immorality – this second ground that carries a name true to its meaning dispels from the heart of the being the agony engendered by immorality. As this bodhisattva on the second ground does not belong to the category of those who revolve in the cycle of existence he is not of cyclic existence, yet he is a glory of existence. This is because all perfect qualities follow for such a bodhisattva, and because he has attained, through the power of

¹⁵⁵ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 42b:6. *Ask Rabling for the Sanskrit of *rna nag ma* and provide an explanatory footnote here to explain this term.

his aspirational prayers aimed for the sentient beings, the excellent causes of [becoming] a universal ruler reigning over the four continents.

This, then, is the thorough exposition of the second ground of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Intent: An Extensive Exposition of “Entering the Middle Way.”*

Third Ground: The Luminous

c) THIRD GROUND, THE LUMINOUS [81]

This has four sections:

- i) Etymology of the name of the ground, the basis
- ii) Qualities of the ground, the attributes
- iii) Distinctive characteristics of the first three perfections
- iv) Conclusion by means of stating the qualities of the ground

i) ETYMOLOGY OF THE NAME OF THE GROUND, THE BASIS

**As the glow of the fire burning off all fuels
Of knowable objects emerge here, this third level
Is the luminous, at this point the Tatagatha's child
Experiences perception of copper-like [light]. 1**

The third ground of the bodhisattva is called The Luminous. Why is it called The Luminous? It is true to the meaning of this name. When the bodhisattva attains the third ground, the glow of the fire of transcendent wisdom that burns off all the fuels of knowable objects – a fire that has the nature capable of pacifying all dualistic elaborations within meditative equipoise – comes to dawn. Here, the child of the Tatagatha who has generated the third ground of awakening mind, for this bodhisattva too, at this point of the third ground, the light of transcendent wisdom will dawn just as a copper-like radiance arises when the sun is about to rise. That is to say that on this ground, during the post meditation periods, the bodhisattva experiences the dawning of red or orange color lights pervading everywhere. Thus the *Precious Garland* states:

The third ground is The Luminous;
For the pacifying light of transcendent wisdom dawns;
As concentration and clear knowing have arisen,
And as attachment and aversion have utterly ceased,
As a fruitional effect of these [attainments],
He shall engage especially in forbearance and joyous effort.
This great celestial being is most learned;
He has undone the attachment of the desire realm.¹⁵⁶

ii) QUALITIES OF THE GROUND, THE ATTRIBUTES

This has four parts:

¹⁵⁶ Nāgājūna, *Ratnavalī*, 5:45-6; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 123b:6.

- (1) Showing how forbearance is preeminent on this ground
- (2) How to cultivate other types of forbearance
- (3) The divisions of the perfection of forbearance
- (4) Other pure qualities that arise on this ground

(1) Showing how forbearance is preeminent on this ground

**If with regard to this inappropriate locus some who are disturbed
Slices off flesh as well as bone from his body for long, [82]
Even if he does this so once ounce at a time,
His forbearance will increase ever more for being cut. 2**

**For a bodhisattva who sees no-self,
Who cuts what at what point in time in what manner?
He who sees all such phenomena as resembling reflections,
Because of that seeing too he will endure. 3**

To explain how the perfection of forbearance is preeminent for this bodhisattva who has attained the light of transcendent wisdom, the lines “*If, with regard to this inappropriate locus, some ...*” is uttered. Since the bodhisattva already possesses optimally preeminence in generosity and ethical discipline, which were described earlier, here, out of the eight remaining perfections, it is [the perfection of] forbearance that comes to be preeminent. The manner in which it comes to be preeminent is this: To the extent the bodhisattva achieves preeminence in the practice of forbearance he does not do so for the remaining seven perfections. Because the bodhisattva of the third ground guards other’s minds, because he possesses pacifying transcendent wisdom as described in the lines “... *the fire burning off all fuels of knowable objects,*”¹⁵⁷ and because he does not manifest engagement of the three doors in such terms as, “He caused harm to me and my kin in the past,” “He is causing harm now,” and with the suspicion that “He might do so in future,” which are the basis of antipathy towards others, he is qualified here as being inappropriate locus for anger.

Though this is so, if someone who is disturbed within, were to slice off not just flesh but bones as well from this bodhisattva – not in large pieces but an ounce at a time [and this too] not in one go but taking pauses at a time so that the cutting is not completed within a short period but over a long while – the bodhisattva will not feel any disturbed states of mind towards that person who is cutting him. In fact, a special feeling of forbearance will arise towards that person in the bodhisattva, who will direct his focus on the suffering of hells and so on that the person might undergo because of that negative karma, suffering that is more grave than any other comparable sufferings. Given that this is how his forbearance is preeminent, even though on the [first] two grounds, such as Perfect Joy, there is no disturbance within the mental continuum, clearly there is no superiority of forbearance. Therefore we should know that the preeminence in forbearance arise from this ground onwards. Not only is his forbearance focused on excessive sufferings, such as those of the hells superior, [83] the bodhisattva of the third

¹⁵⁷ This is a reference to the first two lines of the chapter on The Luminous in Candrakīrti’s root text, *Entering the Middle Way*, which Tsongkhapa explained earlier. See p.*

ground who directly perceives all the attributes of the three spheres – the one *who cuts*, *what is being cut*, and at *what time in what manner* it is being cut with respect to the body of the bodhisattva who sees no-self – as resembling reflections, because of that fact of being free of intellectually acquired conceptions of “I” and “mine” too, that bodhisattva shall be able to endure.

The *Commentary* states, “The conjunctive ‘too’ is to encompass the causes of forbearance.”¹⁵⁸ This indicates that not only does the bodhisattva remain undisturbed because of the earlier reason he endures also because of what has been explained in the immediate precedence. Also, the [the commentary] writes “For this reason too”,¹⁵⁹ which needs to be read as “*because of that seeing too*.”

(2) *How to cultivate other types of forbearance*

This has two parts:

- (a) Inappropriateness of becoming angry
- (b) Appropriateness of cultivating forbearance

The first has four parts:

- (i) It is inappropriate to become angry since it is pointless and has grave ill consequences
- (ii) Showing how it is contradictory not to wish for consequent sufferings yet to retaliate against harm
- (iii) It is inappropriate to become angry since it destroys the virtues accumulated in the past over a long period
- (iv) Rejecting anger on the basis of contemplating numerous faults of intolerance

(i) *It is inappropriate to become angry since it is pointless and has grave ill consequences*

**If one becomes angry at a harm that was done,
Does being angry help reverse what is already done?
So being angry at it has no meaning here and now;
It is in conflict even with the world beyond. 4**

Not only that forbearance is in concordance with the hearts of the bodhisattvas abiding on the grounds, it is also, for others who do not abide on the grounds yet, the cause of guarding all their qualities in that they do not wither away. So to demonstrate that for those who possess intolerance it is more appropriate to turn away from anger, there are the lines “*If one becomes angry...*” up to “*swiftly apply forbearance*.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, 236a:3.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 236a:2. What Tsongkhapa is saying is that the phrase “For this reason too” in the commentary should be read as standing for the phrase “Because of that seeing too” as found in the root text.

¹⁶⁰ MA, 3:4-9.

If, towards a harm done one becomes resentful or angry towards that person, namely the perpetrator, since the harm that is already done cannot be reversed, so by being resentful or harboring animosity against him will the harm that has been done be undone? No, it does not. Therefore, being resentful towards that person is certainly pointless. *Animosity* is a fierce state of mind that is utterly harsh and shares, [84] therefore, the same meaning as *hostility*. Not only is anger pointless, it also conflicts with the welfare of the world beyond. By giving opportunity to anger one projects undesirable fruitional effects in the aftermath of one's death.

(ii) Showing how it is contradictory not to wish for consequent sufferings yet to retaliate against harm

He who, while undergoing sufferings that are the fruits of one's past misdeeds, being ignorant of this harbors the thought "It's others who have caused me harm," for him anger arises towards the perpetrators of harm. By retaliating against the harms he [actually] obstructs what he himself aspires for, namely not to experience the sufferings caused by the harms. This is presented in the following:

**The fruits of nonvirtuous actions committed in the past,
He who speaks of bringing about the exhaustion of these,
How can he lead himself to the seed of further suffering,
Through harming others and through being angry? 5**

Now with respect to this great sufferings that injure one's body, inflicted by one's enemies and so on, for someone who speaks of his wish to bring about exhaustion of all residual karma, which is the condition for undoing all undesirable causally concordant effects of the non-virtuous karma of taking a life that one might have committed in the past – such as the causally concordant effects that still remains although the harsh fruitional effect has already been experienced in the three lower realms - how can such a person lead himself once again to the seeds of that suffering? How is it that, through retaliating against the harms and through his hostility that stirs from his depths, he leads himself to suffering that would be greater even than what is being experienced at present? This would be most inappropriate. Therefore, just as one endures pains inflicted by a physician, being pierced by a sharp needle, for example, as part of the means of curing an illness, likewise, in order to avert limitless future sufferings, it is most appropriate to have forbearance towards minor immediate suffering.

(iii) It is inappropriate to become angry since it destroys virtues accumulated in the past over a long period

This has two parts:

- 1' Points related to the actual context
- 2' Points emerging as side considerations

1' Points related to the actual context

Not only is intolerance the cause that projects unattractive fruitional effects, [85] it is also a cause to exhaust the collection of merits gathered over a long period of time. This is presented in the following:

**Since being angry at the conqueror's children
Destroys within an instance virtues gathered over an eon,
Virtues arising from giving and ethical discipline,
There is no negative action like intolerance. 6**

For whatever reason – either not ascertaining the object to be a bodhisattva or, though ascertaining to be a bodhisattva but because of strong habituation to the afflictions – if the bodhisattva excessively projects on to [other] children of the conquerors who have generated the awakening mind real or unreal faults and happen to experience an angry thought towards them even for an instance, this alone destroys virtues derived through habituation to perfections of giving and ethical discipline as described above – the collection of merits – gathered over a hundred eons. If this is so, what need is there to speak of a non-bodhisattva experiencing anger towards a bodhisattva? Therefore, just as the quantity of water of the great oceans cannot be measured in terms of counting measuring scales, the limits of the fruitional effects of being angry towards a bodhisattva cannot be ascertained. Therefore, when it comes to projecting unattractive consequences at its effects and when it comes to injuring the virtues, there is no greater negativity than anger, namely, intolerance. “Excessively projecting real faults” is explained in *Exposition of the Commentary* as exaggerating a minor fault as a great fault.¹⁶¹

With respect to the statement concerning the destruction of the roots of virtue, *Manifestations of Noble Mañjuśrī* sūtra states:

Mañjuśrī, what is called “anger,” “anger,” is so named because it verily destroys virtues gathered over a hundred eons.¹⁶²

Although it is not explicit in this sūtra whether the object of the anger and the person who is angry here are both bodhisattvas or not, in the *Commentary* both the object and the agent are described in terms of bodhisattvas.¹⁶³ Just prior to the citation from the *Manifestations of Noble Mañjuśrī* sūtra, the following from *Maitreya's Lion Roar* sūtra is quoted in the *Compendium of Sūtras*:

If a bodhisattva were [86] to berate, utter threats, and beat all sentient beings within this trichilocosmic world with a whip, a club, or with his fist, to that extent the bodhisattva shall not suffer wounds or become injured by these. If, however, a bodhisattva were to engender a harmful intent, enmity, or a thought of hatred towards a single bodhisattva, this alone will inflict wounds to that bodhisattva and injure him. Why is this so? Because if he has not forsaken [his aspiration for

¹⁶¹ Jayānda, *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma ra, 47a:2.

¹⁶² *Āryamañjuśrīvikīrṇitānāmamahāyānasūtra*; Toh 96, Kangyur, mdo sde kha, 231b:4.

¹⁶³ *MABh*, 236b:4.

the buddha's] omniscience, such a bodhisattva needs to put on an armor for eons equal to the moments he engendered harmful intent, enmity and thoughts of hatred to another bodhisattva.¹⁶⁴

So Candrakīrti's account of how both the object and the agent [of the anger] here are to be explained in terms of bodhisattvas appears to be based upon this above citation.

If this is so, how does one understand master Āryaśura and /antideva's statements, such as in the following, about how anger destroys roots of virtue gathered over a thousand eons?

Gathered over a thousand eons,
Through giving, venerating the Sugathas, and so on,
Whatever good deeds there are,
An instance of anger destroys all.¹⁶⁵

Although some commentaries of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* state that a single instance of anger toward sentient beings destroys virtues gathered over many thousand eons, this is hard to believe. Now although these two masters do not specify the object and the agent, nevertheless, the object of anger that destroys roots of virtue of a hundred or a thousand eons has to be a bodhisattva. With respect to the agent of such anger, if we were to infer from the expression "great bodhisattva being," it seems to refer to a bodhisattva that is more powerful than the bodhisattva who is the object [of that anger].

The agent of anger [in this context] is certain to be a bodhisattva on the ordinary stage, while for the object, there can be both – one who has attained the grounds and one who has not. So, the following three permutations are possible: (i) A more powerful bodhisattva being angry towards a weaker one, (ii) a weaker bodhisattva being angry towards a more powerful one, and (iii) where both the object and the agent [of anger] are equal in power. Of these, in the first case, [virtues destroyed] is that of hundred eons, and, if a non-bodhisattva become angry towards a bodhisattva it seems this would be of a thousand eons. As to how the roots of virtue are destroyed in the case of the second and third cases, and how [to understand] the superiority and inferiority of the object in the context of the second example, these should be examined on the basis of scriptures. [87]

The passages [in the sūtra citation] from "trichilocosmic world..." up to "will not injure him" explain how if a bodhisattva, on the basis of experiencing anger in his mind towards a non-bodhisattva, verbally berates him and physically hits him, this is different from a causing wounds to a bodhisattva and causing injury to a bodhisattva. On this basis, we can understand that in such a case it is not necessary to put on the armor once again from the start.¹⁶⁶ In contrast, if a bodhisattva were to merely engender anger towards another bodhisattva, without any manifestation in body and speech, it is stated

¹⁶⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma ki, 159b:4.

¹⁶⁵ Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 6:1; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma la, 15b:3. For an eloquent description of the destructive impacts of anger by Āryaśura, see *Once the Buddha Was a Monkey: Āryaśura's Jātakamālā*, pp.137-9.

¹⁶⁶ The meaning of the phrase "to put on armor" (*go cha bgos pa*) is explained by Tsongkhapa later on in this same chapter.

that equal to the number of instances such a state of mind has been engendered to that number of eons he needs to put on armor. It seems that the object of such [an anger] is a bodhisattva who has received the prophecy, while the agent is a bodhisattva who has not yet received the prophecy. The *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom* states:

If a bodhisattva who has not yet received the prophesy
Feels anger and initiates dispute with one who has received it,
Equal to the moments of his flawed mind of enmity
For that many eons he must put on the armor.¹⁶⁷

The need “to put on armor once again from the start” means the following. For example, if there is a bodhisattva who is able to progress soon from the great stage of path of accumulation to the path of preparation, and if were to become angry towards a bodhisattva who has received the prophesy, equal to the number of instances he experienced anger for that many eons he will not be able to progress to the path of accumulation. He will instead need to train once again from start on the path. In this respect, *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* states:

If, towards a bodhisattva who is a great benefactor,
Someone were to engender thoughts of ill-will,
For eons equal to the instances such ill-will has arisen,
He will reside in the hells, so taught the Sage.¹⁶⁸

Here, it is stated that equal to the instances of angry thoughts that has been engendered towards a bodhisattva for that corresponding number of eons one shall reside in the hells. There is also the ill consequence of destroying the roots of virtue gathered over many eons. Now, if someone who has not received the prophesy were to experience anger towards a bodhisattva who has received it, he will remain in the hells; this is just as mentioned in the immediate preceding passage. There is also an instance where the bodhisattva has to put on the armor for that equal number of eons. Thus there are two cases. In the *Summary of Thorough Pulverization Sūtra* it is stated that because of accruing [the karma of] abandoning the Dharma, if one were to declare and purify this defect three times every single day for up to seven years, [88] although its fruitional effects will be purified, as for obtaining forbearance, even it were to be swift one will need ten eons.¹⁶⁹ So, as stated here, if we were to purify and cultivate resolve through all possible ways, even though we might not rectify the slowing down of the path, since this will cleanse the fruitional effects [of the karma], we must endeavor.

2’ Points emerging as side considerations

There are instances where, even though both the object and agent are not bodhisattvas, yet when anger is experienced it destroys the roots of virtue. For example,

¹⁶⁷ *Prajñāpāramitāsaṃcayagāthā*; Toh 13, Kangyur, shes phyin ka, 14b:4.

¹⁶⁸ Śānideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 1:35; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma la, 3b:2.

¹⁶⁹ *Sarvavaiśaṃgraha*; Toh 227, Kangyur, mdo sde dza, 187b:6.

this is as explained in the following text belonging to Sarvastivada school and cited in the *Compendium of Trainings*:

“O monks, look at the monk who prostrates with his entire body to a reliquary [containing] hair and nails and contemplates upon it. Monks, this is excellent. O monks, this monk will enjoy the kingdom of universal monarch a thousand-fold corresponding to the grains of sand that exist between the surface of the earth his body covers down to the golden base that lie at a depth of eighty thousand *yojana* leagues.....” Then, with his palms folded, Upali approached where the Blessed One was and asked: “If the Blessed One speaks of how great such a root of virtue of this monk is, how does such a root of virtue come to be thinned, thoroughly purged and completely exhausted?” “O Upali,” replied the Buddha, “I have seen nothing comparable to inflicting wounds on those who practice the pure conduct and injuring them. Upali, this will thin, thoroughly purge and completely exhaust that great root of virtue. Therefore, O Upali, if one should not harbor thoughts of harming even a piece of log, what need is there to speak of a body endowed with consciousness?”¹⁷⁰

“Thinning” refers, for example, to turning a root of virtue that was generated as great into a smaller one and that was generated for long into a shorter one. This is a weaker form of exhaustion as it does not destroy all the effects. It appears that “purging” refers to a medium level of exhaustion, while “ending” refers to great degree of exhaustion. In the *Lamp of Moon Sūtra* cited in *Compendium of Sutras* it states:

He who acts towards those around with harmful intentions,
He shall not be protected by ethical discipline and study;
He shall not be protected by concentration and wilderness; [89]
He shall not be protected by giving and venerating the buddhas as well.¹⁷¹

“Those around” refers to his fellow monastic members. That he cannot be protected by he six factors, such as ethical discipline, means that, for him, the destruction of the roots of virtue by anger cannot be prevented. As for what specific roots of virtue are being destroyed, this is not explicitly stated in the sūtra cited above. However, in the *Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* this is explained in terms of those of giving, venerating the Sugathas, and so on, while in *Entering the Middle Way* it is explained in terms of those derived from giving and ethical discipline. Since the *Commentary* speaks of “the collection of merit,” it seems that this does not refer to the roots of virtue consisting of the excellent realization of no-self. Examine this, however.

Now, in the *Teachings of Akṣayamati Sūtra* quoted in the *Compendium of Sutras*, citing the simile of how a drop of water that falls into the great ocean does not dry up until the dawn of the great eon, it is stated how the roots of virtue that have been dedicated towards enlightenment does not exhaust until the attainment of awakening.¹⁷² In the *Array of Trees Sūtra* too, citing the simile of how, even though one transforms a

¹⁷⁰ Śantideva, *Śikṣasammuccaya*; Toh 3940, Tengyur, dbu ma *khi*, 83a:3.

¹⁷¹ Śantideva, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma *ki*, 160a:1.

¹⁷² Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma *ki*, 146a:5.

thousand ounces of base metal into gold with an ounce of mercury elixir known as “gold appearing” without the base metal ever consuming the elixir, it is stated how the mercury elixir of awakening mind cannot be consumed by all the base metals of afflictions.¹⁷³ Because of such statements if one thinks that awakening mind as well as the roots of virtue sustained by it and those virtuous roots dedicated towards awakening cannot be destroyed by anger, this is not the case. For it has been stated that even the virtuous roots of the great bodhisattvas can be destroyed. Thus the meaning of the first sūtra cited above is that [these roots of virtue] do not come to exhaust as a result of bringing forth its effects; it does not suggest, however, that they do not come to be eroded by anger. The meaning of second sūtra is also that, just as the afflictions can be totally annihilated in dependence upon the awakening mind, the afflictions are not capable of doing this in return.

With respect to what is meant by [anger] “destroying the roots of virtue,” some assert the following: The potency of the virtues to swiftly give forth their effects is destroyed in that their production of the fruits comes to be postponed, and in its place, the fruits of hatred and its like are brought forth before. It is not the case, however, that later if these roots of virtue were to meet with the conditions they do not give forth their fruits. For if no mundane path can eliminate the seeds of their objects of abandonment, how can any affliction eliminate the seeds [of virtue]? This is impossible, so they assert.

Now, there is no entailment in this reason. For example, even in the case of non-virtues that have been purified by ordinary beings through the application of the four antidotal powers, [90] although this does not involve elimination of the seeds, still it remains impossible for such [karma] to give forth their fruitional effects even if they were to later on meet with the conditions. [Similarly] when one attains the *peak* and *forbearance* stages of the path of preparation, even though one has not eliminated the seeds of wrong view as well as the causes for taking birth in the lower realms, it remains impossible for wrong views to arise in him and for him to take birth in the lower realms even if in future he were to meet with the conditions. Furthermore, a sūtra cited in the *Commentary on the Treasury of Higher Knowledge* states:

As for karma’s fruitions, [it’s] those that are weightier,
Those that are closer, those most habituated toward,
And those committed earliest –
Of all [karma] these are reaped first.¹⁷⁴

As stated here, whatever virtuous or non-virtuous karma happen to reap first, because of this it prevents the space for other karma to reap. Nevertheless this alone cannot be taken as destroying either virtues or non-virtues and nowhere has this been explained in such terms. Otherwise all the other powerful non-virtuous karma should also have been described as destroyers of virtuous roots. So, with regard to this, the commentary to the *Essence of the Middle Way* explains that in both these two cases – the purification of non-virtues through the four powers and the destruction of the roots of virtue by wrong views and harmful intent – are, like damaged seeds from which no sprouts can emerge even when they meet with the conditions, incapable of giving forth their effects even if they

¹⁷³ *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen a, 317a:4.

¹⁷⁴ *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Chapter 4; Toh 4090, Tengyur, mngon pa, *khu*, 94b:5.

meet with conditions later on.¹⁷⁵ The destruction of virtues [by anger] does not mean that the instant anger has arisen, virtues become nonexistent in that mental continuum; rather, it injures the virtues' capacity to bring forth their effects. Here too, since three degrees of annihilation – small, medium and great – are described, to the extent [a root of virtue] has been injured to that extent it is made incapable of giving forth its effect. So there two ways in which an injury can be inflicted – one is the destruction of the ability to give swift rise to new paths and the other is to harm the arising of the [karmic] fruits, such as taking birth in the higher realms.

Being angry towards a bodhisattva, insulting them and disparaging them out of negative motivation, these are described as limitless in terms of their ill consequences in the *Compendium of Sūtras*.¹⁷⁶ Here, since it has been stated that insofar as this is concerned [the gravity] is the same irrespective of whether one has ascertained the object to be a bodhisattva or not and whether the ground for being angry is true or not. Therefore, we should strive with all our efforts to prevent anger in general and, in particular, anger directed towards those who are engaged in monastic life and the bodhisattvas. In □*Ākāśagarbha Sūtra* it is stated that the root infractions destroy virtues that have been generated in the past, and in the *Compendium of Trainings* it is stated that looking at householder's life out of excessive clinging to gifts and honor, being inflated with manifest conceit, as well as forsaking the Dharma, through these virtues that have been generated in the past will come to be consumed and that virtuous activities will fail to increase. [91] Therefore, with recognizing the conditions that destroy the roots of virtue, we must especially [strive to] relinquish them.

(iv) Rejecting anger on the basis of contemplating numerous faults of intolerance

Furthermore, this impotence of intolerance damages one's own self, while the absence of compassion that is potent damages both self and others. This is as follows.

**It creates an ugly appearance and leads to what is not sublime;
It robs one of the reason to differentiate what is right and wrong;
Intolerance swiftly casts one into the lower realms; 7abc**

The instant [anger] arises it turns one's face into an ugly appearance, it leads one towards things not sublime, it robs one of the critical intelligence that evaluates in terms of "This is appropriate to do" and "This is not appropriate to do." This intolerance, anger, leads one swiftly to the lower realms after one's death. So contemplate these ill consequences and, with the thought "I shall never give an opportunity to anger," we should prevent anger.

(b) Appropriateness of cultivating forbearance

This is twofold:

(i) Contemplating numerous qualities of forbearance

¹⁷⁵ Bhāvaviveka, *Tarkajvāla*, chapter 4; Toh 3586, Tengyur, dbu ma *dza*, 184b:4.

¹⁷⁶ Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma *ki*, 149a:1.

(ii) Summary of the points with an advise to cultivate forbearance

(i) *Contemplating numerous qualities of forbearance*

Now, if the above are the faults of intolerance, what are the qualities of its opposite, namely, forbearance? This is as follows:

**Forbearance creates qualities that are contrary to those just described: 7d
With forbearance one is attractive, it sends one among the sublime;
In knowing what is the norm and what is not so,
One becomes learned and in its aftermath [comes]
Birth as celestials and humans, and exhaustion of negative karma. 8**

By practicing forbearance one brings about the qualities that are contrary to the faults of anger described above. For example, by practicing forbearance one obtains attractive physical appearance, one will become dear to or be cherished by the sublime ones and that one will become versed in understanding what is the norm – what is appropriate – and what is not the norm – namely, what is not appropriate. [92] Following one's death, one will take birth as a celestial being or as a human, and one's negative karma gathered through anger and so on in the past will become exhausted. So, contemplating these [benefits], we should cultivate the power of forbearance.

(ii) *Summary of the points with an advice to cultivate forbearance*

**Cognizant of the faults and benefits of anger and forbearance
Of ordinary beings and the bodhisattvas,
Relinquish intolerance and swiftly apply and at all times
Forbearance hailed by the conqueror's children. 9**

As described above, recognizing the faults or the ill consequences of an ordinary being experiencing anger and the benefits of the bodhisattva's forbearance, we should relinquish intolerance and cultivate constantly, that is at all times, forbearance hailed by the Noble Ones.

(3) *The divisions of the perfection of forbearance*

**Even if dedicated towards full awakening of buddhahood,
If there is objectification of the three [spheres] this is mundane.
If there is no objectification this is then presented
By the Buddha as supramundane perfection. 10**

The division of the perfection of forbearance into two – mundane and supramundane – is presented in the four lines beginning with the line “*Even if dedicated towards full*

awakening of buddhahood.” This [distinction] can be understood on the basis of what has been explained before.¹⁷⁷

(4) *Other pure qualities that arise on this ground*

**On that ground concentration and clear cognitions [are attained],
Attachment and aversion come to cease completely;
Because of this at all times one will be also able to
Destroy the attachment of the desire realm. 11**

Just as on this third ground the bodhisattva attains purity of the perfection of forbearance, similarly, he shall attain the purity of four concentrations, such as the first. And illustrated by this, he shall attain the four formless absorptions – Infinite Space, Infinite Consciousness, [93] Nothingness and Peak of Existence – the four immeasurables – loving kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity - five types of clear knowledge – of supernatural feats, of divine ears, of the knowledge of other’s minds, of the recollection of previous lives and the divine eyes. Although he may enter into and exit from these concentration and formless states, seeing that these help complete the causes of awakening and thinking especially of this, he will take birth through the power of aspiration prayer. He will not take birth due to the power of mundane concentrations and formless states. Even though this ability is attained from the first ground, given that on this ground the bodhisattva attains higher training in meditative absorption far superior to the previous grounds, there is the arising of greater doubt as to whether he might take birth through such power. This is why this point is mentioned here. And, on this level, the exhaustion of attachment is complete.

The conjunctive “and” carries the meaning of “also” and it is there to include what is not mentioned, namely delusion. “Exhaustion” here does not mean total exhaustion. For even in sūtra itself it is stated how all the four fetters of the desire, form, cyclic existence and ignorance are being thinned.¹⁷⁸ Now with respect to the meaning of these statements, according to the *Bodhisattva Grounds*, it is through the force of the meditative absorptions of mundane concentration and formless states that one becomes free from attachment towards the desire, form and formless realms. This is the elimination of manifest level as spoken of earlier. Therefore, it seems, the word “being thinned” has been used. The fetters too, they seem to be the ones mentioned in the *Abhidharma* texts.

Here, with regard to statement in the sutra “His fetters in the form of views have already been eliminated earlier,”¹⁷⁹ some explain its meaning in terms of last three of [five types of false] views as having been eliminated on the path of seeing. However, this should be taken to mean that the intellectually acquired five views have been eliminated

¹⁷⁷ Tsongkhapa is referring here to the distinction of forbearance in terms of mundane and supramundane levels, and suggesting here to relate this to his earlier explanation of this same distinction in the contexts of perfection of generosity and the perfection of ethical discipline.

¹⁷⁸ See, for example, *Daśabhumisūtra*, Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 201a:3.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 201a:5. In the Dergé Kangyur edition this sentence reads “Those fetters derived from the views have already been purified even earlier” (*lta ba las byung ba’I bcings pa rnams ni snga nas kyang byang ba yin te...*). In the version of the sūtra cited in Candrakīrti’s *Commentary*, this sentence appears as, “These types of fetters have already been eliminated earlier” (*de lta bur gyur pa’I ‘ching ba rnams ni snga nas spangs pa yin no*).

on the path of seeing. In the *Bodhisattva Grounds*, however, this is explained in terms of how “First, given that one aspires for the suchness of ultimate reality from the ground of experiencing by means of imagination itself, the fetters that are in the form of view are eliminated.”¹⁸⁰ Next, in the sūtra it is stated that false desire, aversion and delusions, which are not likely to recede for many hundred thousand eons, are eliminated on this ground. This refers to the eliminating of the seeds. This in turn is to be understood in terms of the specific object of relinquishment of this ground, for the six levels of the great and medium degrees of the innate afflictions that are the objects of relinquishment of the path of meditation are [94] correlated to the second up to the seventh bodhisattva grounds.

Although the *Commentary*’s author does not explicitly talk of the elimination of intellectually acquired afflictions from the first ground and the innate from the second ground onwards, since the *Precious Garland* states that until the eight ground is attained there is no annihilation of the seed of the afflictions, that grasping at true existence is to be taken as an affliction, that until grasping at true existence is annihilated egoistic view does not come to annihilated, and that on the first ground the three binding factors are eliminated. Therefore differentiation into two classes must be made within the afflictions in general and that a twofold division must be made within the egoistic view in particular. This is extremely clear. Now, in this tradition where grasping at true existence is taken to be an affliction, when the afflictions are being eliminated through the uncontaminated paths, the seeds of each of these grasping at true existence are invariably being eliminated as well. However, the propensities for dualistic perceptions, which are other than these seeds and are taken to be the obscurations to knowledge, these one cannot permanently annihilated [at this stage]. So, since no obscuration to knowledge can be eliminated until all afflictions have become annihilated, it is during the three pure grounds that the obscurations to knowledge are eliminated.

The bodhisattva abiding on the third ground becomes almost the celestial king Indra, the sovereign among the gods. He will become versed in always destroying the attachment of the world, namely that of the sentient beings, towards the desire realm and will become a chief [of beings]. He shall be skilled, therefore, in rescuing the sentient beings from the mires of desire. As for the conjunctive “also,” what appears in Naktsō’s translation of the line “Also the attachments towards desire realm are constantly eliminated” reads better.

iii) DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIRST THREE PERFECTIONS

Now to present clearly the distinctive features of the practitioners of the first three perfections, the nature of their collection, and what fruits are achieved, there is the following:

**The three practices such as giving and so on,
Most of these the Sugatha recommended for the householder;
These constitute what is called the collection;
They are the cause of the buddha’s form embodiment. 12**

¹⁸⁰ Asaṅga, *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Toh 4037, Tengyur, sems tsam wi, 175a:2. Tsongkhapa is here simply providing this alternative explanation of the statement of the sūtra by Asaṅga.

Although both lay and monastic bodhisattvas are practitioners of giving and so on, from the point of view of what is easier and what is more difficult to pursue, [95] the three teachings, such as generosity and so on, is easier for the lay bodhisattvas to pursue. So the Sugatha hailed these three for such practitioners. Of the two collections, it is these three that also constitute what is called the collection of merit. This collection is the cause of the buddha's form embodiment, that is to say it is the principal cause. The *Precious Garland* too states:

There generosity and ethical discipline
And the teaching of forbearance,
These are taught especially for the laity;
So constantly cultivate familiarity with
That takes compassion as their essence.¹⁸¹

In the context of the three teachings that are easier for the lay bodhisattvas to pursue, generosity here refers to [the giving of] material needs and fearlessness, ethical discipline are those of the laity, while forbearance is primarily the one derived from determinedly contemplating the Dharma. In contrast, for the monastic bodhisattvas, joyful perseverance, concentration and wisdom are easier to pursue. It is not the case, however, that these two [the lay and monastic bodhisattvas] do not possess the other remaining [perfections]. Collection of transcendent wisdom consists of concentration and wisdom, and these two are principally the cause of the buddha's truth embodiment. Joyful perseverance is the cause of both two collections.

iv) CONCLUSION BY MEANS OF STATING THE QUALITIES OF THE LEVEL

**This bodhisattva who resides in sun and illuminates,
Dispelling perfectly the darkness within his own self first
He keenly wishes to utterly destroy the darkness of beings;
Though extremely piercing on this level he does not become heated. 13**

This bodhisattva, who abides in the sun known as The Luminous, as this ground first arises, it perfectly illuminates all darkness that obstructs the emergence of this ultimate ground. And by revealing such facts to others, he comes to keenly wish to utterly destroy the darkness of other beings that obstruct their [attainment of the] third ground. Since this bodhisattva destroys the darkness of misdeeds that undermine the higher qualities, he becomes extremely sharp like the sun. [96] Nevertheless, he will not be heated towards the defective beings for he has come to be preeminently habituated to forbearance and because his mental continuum has come to be well-oiled by compassion.

This, then, is the thorough exposition of the third ground of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Intent: An Extensive Exposition of "Entering the Middle Way."*

¹⁸¹ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 4:99; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 122a:1.

The Fourth Ground: The Radiant

D) THE FOURTH LEVEL, THE RADIANT [97]

This has three parts:

- i) How on this ground joyful perseverance is preeminent
- ii) Etymology of name of the ground
- iii) Distinctive feature of its relinquishment

i) How on this ground joyful perseverance is preeminent

Now to present that on this ground, compared to the first three perfections, perseverance is preeminent, it states:

**All higher qualities follow after joyful perseverance;
It is the cause of both collections of merit and intelligence;
Where joyful perseverance comes to be ablaze,
That ground is the fourth, The Radiant.**

Since for someone who does not take joy in the virtues there will be no engagement at all in generosity and so on, no higher qualities come about for him. In contrast, for those who possess a sense of joy in having gathered or in gathering qualities like generosity as mentioned earlier, the qualities that he has already been attained will become enhanced and those not yet attained shall come to be achieved. Therefore, all higher qualities, without exception, follow after joyful perseverance and it is the cause of the two collections of merit and intelligence, namely, transcendent wisdom. The ground where such joyful perseverance comes to be especially ablaze, that is called the fourth ground, The Radiant. Since on the third ground the bodhisattva has attained higher training in meditative absorption far more excellent than that of the first two grounds, from this he has achieved a unique pliancy that permanently dispels laziness. So on this ground the perfection of perseverance comes to be preeminent.

ii) Etymology of name of the ground

**Here the Sugatha's son experiences,
Deriving from special practice of enlightenment factors,
Light [of gnosis] far brighter than the copper colored glow;**

If asked, "For what reason is this ground called The Radiant?" [98] On this fourth ground the Sugatha's son experiences, deriving from practicing the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment to a level far superior compared to before, a light of transcendent wisdom

resembling but superior to the copper glow mentioned in the context of the third ground. So, because the light of the fire of perfect transcendent wisdom comes to be preeminent on this ground, this bodhisattva ground is called The Radiant. These are as stated in the following in the *Precious Garland*, which are included also in *Entering the Middle Way*:

The fourth is called The Radiant
For the light of perfect gnosis has emerged,
For he has cultivated especially
All the factors of enlightenment;
As a fruitional effect of this,
He shall be a king of Conflict-Free gods;
He shall be skilled in utterly destroying
The egoistic view and its derivations.¹⁸²

The thirty-seven factors of enlightenment refer to the seven sets, such as the four foundations of mindfulness. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness are (1) the foundation of mindfulness of body, (2) of feelings, (3) of mind and (4) of mental objects; the Four Perfect Endeavors are (1) generating the virtuous factors that have not yet arisen and (2) increasing those that have already arisen, and (3) not generating the non-virtuous factors that have not yet arisen and (4) perfectly relinquishing those that have already arisen; the Four Limbs of Supernatural Feats are that (1) of aspiration, (2) of joyful perseverance, (3) of mind and of (4) of analysis in the form of meditative stabilization; the Five Faculties are the faculties (1) of faith, (2) of joyful perseverance, (3) of mindfulness, (4) of meditative absorption and (5) of wisdom; the Five Powers are the powers of faith, and so on; the Seven Limbs of Enlightenment are (1) of mindfulness, (2) of clear discriminations of the characters of phenomena, (3) of joyful perseverance, (4) of joy, (5) of pliancy, (6) of meditative absorption and (7) the limb of enlightenment of perfect equanimity. The qualification “the limb of enlightenment of perfect” should be added to the end of the first six as well. The Eightfold Noble Path consists of (1) the right view and (2) investigation, (3) speech and (4) end of action, (5) livelihood and (6) effort, (7) mindfulness and (8) right meditative absorption of the Noble path. The qualification “right” should be added at the end of the first seven as well.

Now, the first ground is the basis of training, and with respect to the actual trainings, higher training in ethical discipline is correlated to the second ground, higher training in mind is correlated to the third ground, [99] while higher training in wisdom is correlated to from the fourth to the sixth ground. Within this, here on this ground, the bodhisattva becomes endowed with the training in wisdom highly versed in the coarse and subtle aspects of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment.

iv) Distinctive feature of its relinquishment

Those associated with the view of self cease entirely.

[Here on this ground] those that are associated with the “self” or subtle egoistic view – namely those that precede it, such as grasping at coarse levels of “I” and “mine” in terms

¹⁸² Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 5:47-8; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 123b:7.

of holding on to a self, a sentient being, and so on, and its attributes as self-sufficient, substantial existence as well as the grasping at self-existence of phenomena, such as holding onto the aggregates, elements, sources and so on, as being truly existent – will come to entirely annihilated. The meaning of “annihilation” here is that the bodhisattva has eliminated the seeds of the twofold self-grasping that constitute the objects of relinquishment of this ground; it is not that the entire [self-grasping] has come to be annihilated. The sūtra too indicates the existence of innate egoistic views.¹⁸³

This, then, is the thorough exposition of the fourth ground of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Intent: An Extensive Exposition of “Entering the Middle Way.”*

¹⁸³ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 207a:5. *This annotation is wrong.

The Fifth Ground: The Unconquerable

e) THE FIFTH GROUND, THE UNCONQUERABLE [100]

This has two parts:

- i) Etymology of the name of the fifth ground
- ii) How concentration is preeminent and one become versed in the truths

i) Etymology of the name of the fifth ground

**This great being on the unconquerable level
Cannot be defeated even by all the maras;**

The great being abiding on the fifth ground, The Unconquerable, if he cannot be defeated by all the obstructive forces such as Devaputra that reside in the entire world systems, what need is there to speak of the others, such as the servants of the mara that obey his command? Therefore, the name of this ground is known as The Unconquerable. The *Precious Garland* States:

The fifth is The Unconquerable,
For it's so hard for all the maras to subdue it;
For here mastery in understanding arises
On the subtle points of Noble truths and so on;
As for its fruitional effect,
He shall be a king of the Tushita gods;
He undoes the contents of the afflicted views
Crafted by all proponents of extremes.¹⁸⁴

ii) How concentration is preeminent and one becomes versed in the truths

**Concentration preeminent and in the truths of the wise
He shall attain mastery through close understanding as well.**

On this fifth ground, out of the ten perfections, it is the perfection of concentration that comes to be preeminent. When described thus, that preeminence in the [first] four perfections – from generosity to joyful perseverance – have already been achieved before can be discerned. So it can be inferred that this is out of the remaining six perfections. This is to say that to the extent the bodhisattva attains a state that can never be trodden upon by the opposing forces of concentration, such as distraction, to that extent it is lacking for the perfection of wisdom and so on. Not only is concentration preeminent, the bodhisattva shall also attain mastery over the subtle understanding of the nature or essence of the truths of the wise or the Noble Ones, which require comprehension by

¹⁸⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 5:49-50; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 124a:1.

refined cognition. [101] Therefore, here he becomes endowed with the superior wisdom that is versed in the coarse and subtle aspects of the truths.

Here, with respect to the statements made separately in the *Ten Grounds Sūtra*¹⁸⁵ on how the fifth ground bodhisattva comes to be versed in the four truths of suffering, its origin, cessation and path and how he comes to be versed in the conventional and ultimate truths – given that it has been taught in the *Meeting of Father and Son Sūtra*¹⁸⁶ as well as in the *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* the conventional and ultimate truths definitely exhausts [the category of truth] – a question is raised as to how can there be four truths separate from the two truths? In responding to this question, the *Commentary* explains that although it is true that there is no truth not encompassed within the two truths, the four truths have taught in order to demonstrate that with respect to what is to be relinquished – the class of afflicted phenomena – there is origin that is the cause and suffering, the effect, and with respect to what is to be affirmed – the class of enlightened phenomena – there is the truth of the path, which is the cause, and the truth of cessation, the effect. Of these, the *Commentary* states the suffering, origin and the truth of the path to be conventional truth, while the cessation constitutes the ultimate truth.¹⁸⁷

In his *Commentary to Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* too, Candrakīrti explains nirvāṇa to be the ultimate truth and the other three truths to be conventional truth, and nirvāṇa is a truth of cessation.¹⁸⁸ Furthermore, in this commentary to *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* he states that the Teacher accepts the possibility of direct knowledge of the truth of cessation, and how this would be untenable for the Buddhist essentialists who assert direct valid cognitions to possess as their object entities with intrinsic characteristics. In his own position, he establishes the direct knowledge of cessation in terms of the realization of suchness by the uncontaminated transcendent wisdom of meditative equipoise. So, if the truth of cessation is a conventional truth, such presentations would become utterly untenable. Furthermore, given that Candrakīrti endeavors to establish with numerous efforts the necessity of direct realization of the truth of suchness when nirvāṇa is actualized, therefore, to speak of the truth of cessation as a conventional truth is to be uncritical.

Although the negation of true existence, the object of negation, on a given basis is taken to be the ultimate truth, this does not entail that the object of negation of whatever constitutes ultimate truth cannot possibly exist as a knowable. For example, *Hymns to the Ultimate Expanse* states:

That which if not known
Makes one revolve in the three worlds;
That which definitely abides in all beings –
To that ultimate expanse I bow and pay homage. [102]

That which is the cause of saṃsāra,
From purifying this very thing comes
The purity that is nirvāṇa;

¹⁸⁵ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 212a:7.

¹⁸⁶ *Pitāputrasamāgamanasūtra*, Toh 44, Kangyur, dkon brtsegs *nga*, 61b:4.

¹⁸⁷ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, 'a, 143a:7.

¹⁸⁸ Candrakīrti, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti*; Toh 3864, Tengyur, dbu ma *ya*, 7b:5.

Dharmakaya too is this.¹⁸⁹

So, just as it is stated in the above that when the ultimate reality tainted with stains is purified it is described as nirvāṇa and as Dharmakaya, there are numerous instances where the object of negation of pristine ultimate reality is described as a stain. Furthermore, if it remains impossible for the ultimate reality to become free of stains, endeavors will then become fruitless; if, on the other hand, this is possible, then its object of negation does exist as a knowable. For example, although the rabbit's horn, which is the object of negation in the context of the non-existence of rabbit's horn, does not exist as a knowable, one can still posit the absence of vase – whose object of negation does exist as a knowable [i.e. the vase] – as an instance of the non-existence of rabbit's horn. The same is true here.

So, from the point of view of the ultimate reality that pervades all bases in general, both pure and impure, such as the negation of the two kinds of selfhood, then it is identified in terms of the mere negation of an object of negation that cannot possibly exist as a knowable. However, as a given basis becomes progressively more purified of stains, its ultimate reality too becomes progressively more purified. Therefore, in the case of a special basis, it is not adequate for its purity to be only one-sided; it is necessary for it to be purified also of the adventitious stains corresponding to the relevant contexts. This then is what is called the “the truth of cessation.”

In the *Ten Grounds Sūtra* although numerous names bearing the word “truth,” such being versed in the truth of defining characteristics on this ground, are found mentioned, among these too there is none that is not encompassed within the two truths.

This, then, is the thorough exposition of the fifth ground of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Intent: An Extensive Exposition of “Entering the Middle Way.”*

¹⁸⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Dharmadhātustava*, Toh 1118, Tengyur, stod tshogs ka, 63b:3.

PART III: SIXTH GROUND

Sixth Ground I Preliminary Topics

2) EXPLAINING THE SIXTH GROUND, THE MANIFEST [103]

This has four parts:

- a) Etymology of the name of the ground and preeminence of wisdom
- b) Praise of the perfection of wisdom
- c) Suchness of the profound dependent origination that is seen
- d) Conclusion by means of stating the qualities of the ground

a) ETYMOLOGY OF THE NAME OF THE GROUND AND PREEMINENCE OF WISDOM

**On the directly facing the mind abides in meditative equipoise,
He approaches the factors of full awakening,
By seeing the truth of origination through dependence,
Abiding in wisdom he attains true cessation. 1**

Having attained on the fifth ground a thoroughly pure perfection of concentration, the bodhisattva abides in the most excellent mind of meditative equipoise of the sixth ground, namely, Directly Facing or The Manifest. Abiding, on the basis of this, in the sixth ground, the bodhisattva who sees the profound suchness of dependent origination of mere conditionedness, he shall abide in the most excellent perfection of wisdom and shall thereby attain the cessation. Prior to this, such as on the fifth ground and so on, the bodhisattva does not attain the cessation for there exists no preeminence in the excellent perfection of wisdom. And through excellence in the five perfections alone one cannot attain the cessation. (1) Because here, on the basis of preeminence of wisdom, the reflection-like ultimate reality has come to be manifest, (2) because on the fifth ground the bodhisattva has taken the truth of the path as his object, and (3) because the bodhisattva now is directly facing the attainment of the qualities of the fully awakened buddha, this ground is called The Manifest.

Although the *Explanation of the Commentary* interprets the second reason in terms of the path of the non-observance of cognition and its object becoming manifest,¹⁹⁰ the phrase “on the fifth ground the bodhisattva has taken the truth of the path as his object” is a reference to the last of the four truths. So its meaning is that, because the bodhisattva has attained versedness in the coarse and subtle aspects of the four truths on that ground, on the sixth ground the wisdom that is versed in the four truths comes to full realization. The first reason indicates how the wisdom versed in the sequential and reversal order of [the twelve links of] dependent origination comes to full realization here. Thus the meaning here is that, on the basis of full realization of these two trainings

¹⁹⁰ Jayānanda, *Madhyamakāvatārikā*; Toh 3870, Tengyur, dbu ma ra, 11b:6.

in wisdom, the truths and dependent origination have become manifest. Thus, on this ground, given that the three trainings in wisdom are fully realized, and since it is the case that the more distinctly superior one's tranquil abiding is the more distinctly superior one's penetrative insight comes to be, and that on the fifth ground the bodhisattva has attained most excellent perfection of concentration so here, on the sixth ground, the perfection of wisdom comes to be most excellent. Therefore, it is from this ground the unique form of absorption into the cessation is attained. *The Precious Garland* states:

The sixth is called Directly Facing;
 For it directly faces the buddha's qualities.
 Through familiarity with tranquility and insight,
 One flourishes with the attainment of cessation.
 As for its fruitional effect,
 One will be the king of Prānirmanaratih gods.
 Since he is not outshone by the śravakas,
 He pacifies those with inflated pride.¹⁹¹

“Prānirmanaratih” refers to “Nirmanaratih.”¹⁹²

b) PRAISE OF THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM

To demonstrate that the collections other than the perfection of wisdom, such as of generosity, depend upon the perfection of wisdom for them to traverse to the resultant ground, the following is stated:

**Just as a group of blind is easily lead to the place
 Where they desire to go by a single person with eyes,
 Likewise here too intelligence sustains the blind qualities
 And journeys to [the land of] the conquerors. 2**

Just as, for example, a single person with eyes can easily lead an entire group of blind to the destination where they wish to go to, likewise in the context of the path too intelligence – namely the perfection of wisdom – sustains qualities such as generosity that are defective with respect the sight of suchness and help them traverse to the resultant ground of conqueror itself. For the perfection of wisdom sees without distortion what is and what is not a right path. The *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom* too states:

Millions and billions of blind people bereft of sight,
 Ignorant of the roads, how can they get to the towns?
 If wisdom is lacking then these five perfections,

¹⁹¹ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 4:51; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 124a:1.

¹⁹² Tib. *rab 'phrul ni 'phrul dga'* 'o This is a comment on the Tibetan word *rab 'phrul* that is found in the translation of the above verse from Nāgārjuna's *Ratnavālī*. Tsongkhapa is simply saying that this word *rab 'phrul* is the same as *'phrul dga'*, the latter being the more common one. Nirmanaratih gods (*'phrul dga'*) are one of the six classes of gods belonging to the Desire realm.

Lacking in sight, cannot touch the awakening.¹⁹³

The Diamond Cutter too states:

For example, if a person with sight were to step into the dark, he will not see anything. Likewise, one who has fallen into [grasping at] real entities will view the bodhisattva that is thoroughly engaged in generosity. O Subhuti, it is thus. For example, when day breaks and sun shines the person with eyes will see all the varied forms. Likewise, one who has not fallen into [grasping at] real entities will view the bodhisattva that is thoroughly engaged in generosity.¹⁹⁴

The same is true for ethical discipline and so on.

c) SUCHNESS OF THE PROFOUND DEPENDENT ORIGNATION THAT IS SEEN

This has five parts:

- i) Promising to explain the profound truth
- ii) Identifying the vessel to expound the profound truth
- iii) How higher qualities ensue if this is expounded
- iv) Urging persons who are suitable vessel to listen
- v) How the suchness of dependent origination is expounded

i) PROMISING TO EXPLAIN THE PROFOUND TRUTH

One might ask, “How is it that, as stated earlier, when the bodhisattva on the sixth ground sees dependent origination that he sees the suchness of dependence origination of *this* emerging from *that*?” In response to this, the *Commentary* states:

The nature of this is something that does not fall within the purview of those like us whose eyes of intelligence is entirely densely covered with cataracts of ignorance. It does fall, however, within the purview of those abiding on the advanced grounds, such as the sixth ground. Therefore, this is not something to be asked to someone like us. One should ask this question to the buddhas and the bodhisattvas who are free of the cataracts of ignorance, whose eyes of intelligence are annointed with ointment that is the excellent vision of emptiness which destroys the cataracts of ignorance.¹⁹⁵

Since it is the case that the application of eye ointment makes one’s vision clearer and does not remove the eyes, likewise, through applying the ointment that is the vision of emptiness one’s eyes of intelligence becomes clearer, but it does not remove one’s eyes

¹⁹³ *Prajñāpāramitāsamcayāṭha*; Toh 13, shes phyin ka, 6a:5.

¹⁹⁴ *Vajraccedikā*; Toh 16, Kangyur, shes phyin ka, 127a:1.

¹⁹⁵ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, 244b:3.

of transcendent wisdom. If one understands this point, one will not be tainted by the abject denigrating view that transcendent wisdom does not exist in the meditative equipoise of the Noble Ones.

One might ask, “Is it not the case that in sūtras such as the *Mother [Perfection of Wisdom]* and the *Ten Grounds* it has been taught that the bodhisattvas who engage in the perfection of wisdom see the suchness of dependent origination? So why do you not expound it by following after the scriptures?” Since ascertaining the purport of the scriptures too is difficult, someone like us cannot reveal suchness even on the basis of the scriptures. Now, this statement is being made from the point of view of teaching [suchness] independently. However, to indicate that, on the basis of seeing how the treatises composed by valid masters expound the scriptures without distortion, one can ascertain the purport of the scriptures, the following is stated:

**That he has realized the truth of the profound teachings,
This is established through scriptures and reason as well,
So on the basis of Noble Nāgārjuna’s treatises,
I shall explain the standpoint as it really abides. 3**

Just as the bodhisattva on the sixth ground has realized the highly profound teaching of profound emptiness, likewise Noble Nāgārjuna, having understood the scriptures without distortion, presented the suchness of all phenomena in extremely clear manner in his *Treatise on the Middle Way* by means of scriptural authority and through reasoning as well. Therefore, just as the treatises of Noble Nāgārjuna present suchness, I, Candrakīrti, [too] shall expound this exactly as it abides in the tradition presented by Nāgārjuna.

One might ask, “How is it that Noble Nāgārjuna has ascertained the meaning of the definitive scriptures?” This, we know on the basis of the authority of the scriptures. The *Descent to Lañka Sūtra* states:

In the south in the land of coconut trees,
There shall be a monk known as the Glorious
Who shall be called by the name Nāga;
He shall destroy the standpoints of “is” and “is not;”
He shall expound my vehicle in the world,
This unsurpassed Great vehicle;
Accomplishing the Perfect Joy ground,
He shall depart to the Blissful Realm.¹⁹⁶

Thus it was stated that Nāgārjuna will interpret the definite vehicle, which is the freedom from the two extremes of existence and non-existence. This is the Licavi youth by the name of Lokapriyadarśana, a contemporary of the Buddha and mentioned in the *Sublime Golden Light Sūtra*,¹⁹⁷ who had assumed rebirth [as Nāgārjuna]. The *Great Clouds Sūtra* states:

¹⁹⁶ *Lañkāvatārasūtra*; Toh 107, Kangyur, mdo sde ca, 165b:5.

¹⁹⁷ *Āryasuvarṇaprabhāsottamasūtenrarāja*; Toh 557, Kangyur, rgyud ‘bum pha, 4b:6. This Licavi youth is the key protagonist in *The Sublime Golden Light Sūtra*.

When it has been four hundred years after my death, this youth shall become a monk known by the name of Nāga and shall propagate my teaching. Finally, he shall become a king called Jñānakāraprabha in the realm known as the Utterly Transparent Light.¹⁹⁸

These citations establish, therefore, that there certainly exists undistorted authority of definitive scriptures on this. In *Mañjuśrī's Root Realizations* too, the time of Nāgārjuna's coming and his name are same as this [sūtra]. It is stated there that he shall live for six hundred years.¹⁹⁹ In the *Great Drum Sutra* it is stated that this Liccavi youth Lokapriyadarśana will be a monk bearing the name of a teacher and will propagate the teaching when it comes to decline eighty years after the Buddha's death. And after a hundred years he will pass away and will take birth in the Blissful Realm.²⁰⁰ This too is accepted as by elder Bodhibhadra and great Atiśa to be prophecy of this master.²⁰¹ This is based on the explanation that Liccavi Priyadarśana shares the same mental continuum with Nāgārjuna. In the *Great Drum* the monk is stated to be of the seventh ground. However, this statement and those cited earlier cannot be proven as being in contradiction [with each other]. For example, in some scripture some of the Guardian kings are described as stream-enterers, while in others, they are described as buddhas. So, when it comes to scriptures, there seem to be such diversity [of statements].

ii) IDENTIFYING THE VESSEL TO EXPOUND THE PROFOUND TRUTH

This definitive treatise too should be taught to those who, because of their habituation in the past, have implanted the seed for realizing emptiness and not to others. As for the others, even if they were to listen to the treatises that present emptiness, because they are ridden with thoughts that remain distorted with respect to emptiness, they will suffer grave unbeneficial consequences. The manner in which such grave unbeneficial consequences will ensue is this: Some, being not learned, will forsake emptiness and will depart to the lower realms. Some will distortedly apprehend the meaning of emptiness in the context of absence of intrinsic existence in terms of such thoughts as "All these phenomena are non-existent; they do not exist." Thus they will apprehend this in a distorted manner, and the wrong view denigrating the entire phenomena of cause of effects will be engendered at first and, without letting go of it, it will come to increase further and further. Commenting on the following stanza

If one falsely views emptiness,
Those of weak intelligence will be doomed;
Just like handling a snake erroneously
And just like a spell gone wrong.²⁰²

¹⁹⁸ *Mahāmeghasūtra*; Toh 232, Kangyur, mdo sde wa, 187a:7.

¹⁹⁹ *Mañjuśrīmūlatantra*; Toh 543, Kangyur, rgyud 'bum na, 308b:6.

²⁰⁰ *Mahābherīhāraḥaparivarta*; Toh 222, Kangyur, mdo sde dza, 100b:5.

²⁰¹ See, for example, Bodhibhadra, *Jñānasārasamuccayanibandhana*, Toh 3852, Tengyur, dbu ma tsha, 29a:7; and Atiśa, *Ratnakaraṇḍodghāṭamadhyaṃakopadeśa*, Toh 3930, Tengyur, dbu ma ki, 114a:6.

²⁰² Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 124:11; Toh 3824, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, 15a:2.

the *Clear Words* states that in order not to fall into the extreme of denigrating the conventional it is necessary not to injure the reflection-like karma and its effects; and in order not to fall into the extreme of reifying the ultimate it is necessary to see karma and its effects only in things that have no intrinsic existence.²⁰³ To be contrary to these two has been described as falling into the extremes of eternalism and nihilism. Thus, since Candrakīrti has stated that if one were to conceive conditioned things to be not existent this constitutes a wrong view, so although there may be a difference between *non-existent* and *not existent* at the level of wording, insofar as the perception of non-existence is concerned, despite careful observation, there is no difference whatsoever.

In his commentary to the following from the *Four Hundred Stanzas on the Middle Way*

One goes to the lower realms alone;
Who're not ordinary, only to peace.²⁰⁴

Candrakīrti explains that some who are not sublime and listen to the teaching of no-self, because of their abandonment [of emptiness] and distortedly understanding it, they go to the lower realms alone.²⁰⁵ Thus both these [approaches] are described as leading to the lower realms. “To understand it distortedly” is to apprehend the meaning of emptiness in terms of being not existence. So those who, while lacking the power of intelligence to differentiate the extremely subtle points yet possess manifest conceit of having such an ability, for such individuals, to engage in the fervor of false determination of the mere words pertaining to the profound truth not suited to their mental faculties shall bring forth serious unbeneficial consequences. Therefore, with these matters, one should be most careful.

If asked, “Now, in what way can one determine what is so difficult to ascertain – that is to say, ‘It is appropriate to teach emptiness to him’ and ‘It is not appropriate to teach emptiness to that person’?” To indicate that this is something that can be ascertained on the basis of external signs, the following is stated:

**Even whilst in the ordinary stage when hearing emptiness,
He experiences within utter joy again and again,
Tears flowing from such utter joy moisten his eyes,
Whose hairs of bodily pores stand up – 4**

**In him resides the seed of full awakening;
He is the vessel to whom to reveal this [teaching];
To him should you teach the sublime ultimate truth; 5**

Even on the ordinary level, on the beginner’s stage, when one hears an undistorted discourse on emptiness, because of hearing this one comes to experience within a sense of utter joy again and again towards such a discourse, with tears flowing from such sheer joy moistens the eyes and the hairs of one’s bodily pores stand up. It is in such a person

²⁰³ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a. 164a:7.

²⁰⁴ Āryadeva, *Catuhśastakakārikā*, 12:12; Toh 3846, dbu ma *tsha*, 13b:4.

²⁰⁵ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma *ya*, 190a:7.

what is called the seed of realizing emptiness – the seed of the fully enlightened buddha’s intelligence, the non-conceptual transcendent wisdom, exists. It is this person, who is the vessel to whom the versed master should closely reveal suchness. So it is to such a person that the sublime ultimate truth, whose characteristics shall be explained later, should be taught.

The point here is that if one perceives the arising of these physical signs on the basis of the convergence of hearing an undistorted discourse on emptiness and not being incapable of understanding it, this then is an unmistakable indication. In contrast, if the person does not understand the meaning or, even if he does, if the signs do not arise, for the time being, one cannot determine him as to be a vessel for the profound truth. Nevertheless, if he does not deviate from the dictates of his sublime teachers he can be a suitable vessel to implant numerous new potencies for realizing emptiness.

iii) HOW HIGHER QUALITIES ENSUE IF THE PROFOUND TRUTH IS EXPOUNDED

For him the qualities that follow this will come about. 5d

**Always will he abide by taking perfect ethical discipline;
He will engage in generosity and cultivate compassion;
He will practice forbearance and will thoroughly dedicate
His virtues towards freeing all sentient beings. 6**

He will accord respects to those who aspire for full awakening. 7a

Teaching emptiness to the vessel described above will not be fruitless. Why is this so? This is because not only that such a listener will not be burdened with the unbeneficial consequences engendered by distorted apprehension of emptiness, he will also come to enjoy the higher qualities that follow after or that result from listening to the view of emptiness. How do these [benefits] come about? This suitable vessel will consider listening to the view of emptiness to be akin to finding a treasure; and in order that this view does not degenerate in other lives as well, he will always adopt right ethical discipline and abide by it. He will do so by reflecting “If, due to moral degeneration, I were to fall into the lower realms the continuity of the view of emptiness will come to cease.” Thus he will adopt ethical discipline and guard it without degeneration. To become morally degenerate, it is not necessary first to adopt ethical discipline; even those [acts] that are naturally reprehensible, which are the opposites of ethical discipline, constitute moral degeneration.

He will further reflect “Even if, because of observing ethical discipline, I were to be born in the higher realms if I become poor and am impoverished of the conditions for sustenance, such as food, drinks, medicine and clothing, then devoted to seeking these the continuity of listening to the view of emptiness and meditating on its meaning will come to cease.” Thus, as explained before, he will engage in generosity in relation to the higher and lower fields.²⁰⁶ Reflecting “It is the view of emptiness sustained by great compassion

²⁰⁶ To engage in generosity in relation to the higher and lower fields means to make offerings to such higher fields like the Three Jewels or one’s teacher, and to give material aid, counsel, and psychological comfort and peace to those who are needy, such as the poor and the weak.

that will lead to buddhahood and not otherwise,” he will cultivate habituation to great compassion, which is the root. Reflecting “Through anger one goes to the lower realms, that it destroys the virtues, and that one comes to acquire extremely unappealing appearance, because of these the Noble Ones will not be pleased,” he will practice forbearance. Given that ethical discipline and so on that are not dedicated repeatedly towards the buddha’s omniscience do not become a cause for buddhahood, and that no uninterrupted continuity of their fruits in the form of embodiments and material resources will fail to emerge, he will thoroughly dedicate the virtues of ethical discipline and so on towards awakening for the sake of liberating all beings from cyclic existence. And seeing that, except for the bodhisattvas, others like śravakas and self-enlightened ones cannot teach the profound dependent origination like the bodhisattvas, he will come to accord tremendous respect to the bodhisattvas who aspire for full awakening.

Those of the Great Vehicle whose understanding of the view of emptiness has penetrated the essential point, perfect understanding as described above will arise and they will become extremely respectful towards accomplishing the vast aspects [of the path]. This is an object worthy of the highest acclaim. The *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* states:

Those who understand this emptiness of phenomena
Yet [also] conform to the law of karma and its results,
That is more amazing than amazing!
That is more wondrous than wondrous!²⁰⁷

These [statements] apply to someone who has shunned the two faults – the forsaking [of emptiness] by the two kinds of unsuitable vessels out of lack of admiration [for the teaching] and the other case where one might possess a seeming admiration but comes to understand that reason negates the entire world of cause and effects – and have come to realize that, on the basis of the view of emptiness in terms of no intrinsic existence, all functions are tenable more than ever. Otherwise, when one engages from the standpoint of someone who has found the view, all presentations of karma and its effects, such as morality, turn out to be something resembling counting the lines of a rabbit’s horn. One might come to hold “All of this is for the benefit of those who have not understood the definitive meaning, and they are irrelevant for someone who has understood the definitive meaning. For they are all conceptual fabrications and all forms of conceptualization constitute grasping at signs in the form of clinging to true existence.” Thus, like the Chinese monk Hoshang [Mohoyen], one comes to undermine all the virtues.

Some claim that, on the level of illusory perception, however, one does engage in the ethical norms for the time being. Now, if one distinguishes within conceptualization two kinds – one that constitutes grasping at true existence and one that does not – then the assertion that reason negates all objects becomes a meaningless chatter. If no such distinction of two classes is made, however, then the two categories of realizations – those pertaining to aspects of the view and those pertaining to the aspects of [altruistic] conduct – will come to undermine one another, like heat and cold. There will be no possibility at all of defining the illusory perception from, the perspective *from which*

²⁰⁷ Nāgārjuna, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, 88; Toh *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, 72; Tengyur, rgyud ‘grel ngi, 41b:4.

[things are posited], *that which* posits, and those *that are being posited*. So to utter such assertions is merely conjuring something in the dark. These protagonists are in fact upholding the very standpoint of those being critiqued by the treatises referred to earlier.

iv) URGING PERSONS WHO ARE SUITABLE VESSEL TO LISTEN

**Individuals who are wise in the ways of the profound and the vast,
Progressively, as they will attain the level of The Thoroughly Joyous;
So those who seek this, pray listen to this path. 7bcd**

Such a person who is, as described earlier, versed in the ways of the profound and vast [aspects of the path], he will definitely gather the collections of virtues of both profound and vast aspects whilst on the ordinary level for a long time and with no interruption. Because of this, gradually he shall attain the ground of Perfect Joy. So, those who seek this ground of Perfect Joy, pray listen to this path. Thus they are being urged here. In this connection, the *Commentary on the Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

If one becomes respectful towards the discourse on the emptiness of intrinsic existence, then by cultivating the conditions that are conducive to it he will act in a manner that will help increase his admiration for emptiness. His compassion will be great, he will repay the kindness of the Blessed Tatagatha, and will have the wish to completely relinquish the causes and marks that obstruct the sublime Dharma – namely, the causes of the great abyss; he will consider the destitute and will give away even those that are hard to give; he will gather others as well through the four factors of attracting others. So reveal this sublime teaching closely, with all your efforts, to those persons who are the vessels of sublime Dharma.²⁰⁸

So it has been taught that one should reveal this teaching with great efforts. This is [of course] to those who are free of the two faults of an unsuitable vessel. Even to those who have admiration but do not understand exactly as it is, one should explain it with skilful means so that it does not undermine his conviction in dependent origination. A well-learned speaker who even teaches listeners that qualify as the lowest among the suitable vessels, this would be an act of great merit. The *Compendium of Sūtras* states:

He who aspires for the profound teaching collects all the merits for he will accomplish, until buddhahood is achieved, all mundane and supramundane perfect factors. This is found in the *Gift of Youth Ratna Sūtra*: “O Mañjuśrī, compared to a bodhisattva who is bereft of skilful means and engages in the six perfections for a hundred or thousand eons, if someone were to listen to this class of teaching [even] with doubts, he shall generate far more merits. If this is so, what need is there to speak of listening to it without doubt. What need is there too to speak of someone who scribes it in letter and transmitting it through reading, upholds it, and teaches it extensively to others as well?”²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 188b:7.

²⁰⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma ki. 205a:6.

In the *Diamond Cutter* too:

The Blessed One stated: “Subhuti, what do you think? If, for example, there were to be equal numbers of banks of Ganges to that of the numbers of grains of sand that exist on the banks of river Ganges, will this be a large number of grains of sand?” “If the grains of sand that exist on the banks of Ganges itself is so numerous, what need is there to speak of the grains of sands of that many banks of Ganges?” replied Subhuti. The Blessed One said, “O Subhuti, I shall share this with you. You should comprehend this. If, for example, a man or a woman were to fill worlds equal to the number of grains of sand that exist on the banks of river Ganges with seven types of precious materials and offer these to the Tātāgathas, will that man or woman generate, on that basis, numerous merits?” “O Blessed One,” replied Subhuti, “yes, this will be numerous. Tātāgatha, this will indeed be numerous.” Then the Blessed One stated, “If someone upholds even a stanza of four lines out of this class of teaching and reveal this to others as well, he will generate extremely numerous merits.”²¹⁰

In the *Treasury of Tātāgathas Sūtra* the ten great non-virtues are enumerated and it is stated that someone who possesses these were to enter the teaching of no-self such a sentient being that has faith in and aspiration in all phenomena being primordial pure will not go to the lower realms.²¹¹ The *Chapter on Overcoming the Maras* states:

A monk who understands all phenomena to be utterly tamed, understands even the limits of the beginning of the misdeeds to be devoid of intrinsic existence, who dispels the remorse borne of the occurrence of misdeeds and thus does not make it firm, because of this, if this clamps down the heinous deeds, what need is there to speak of the minor [misdeed] of erroneous practices of the rites and ethical discipline?²¹²

The *Ajātaśatru Sūtra* states:

If someone who has committed a heinous deed hears this teaching and enters into it and aspires for it, I shall not speak of his karmic deed as a karmic defilement.²¹³

So, as stated, such are the benefits of engaging in teaching and listening to the profound truth, as well as the benefits of aspiring for and contemplating it on other occasions. In order to receive excellently the benefits of expounding [the profound truth], two conditions must be present: One’s motivation must be pure thorough not seeking gifts, honor or fame and that one must not grasp the meaning of the teaching being expounded erroneously but explain it without distortion. For it has been stated that if one expounds

²¹⁰ *Vajraccedikā*; Toh 16, Kangyur, shes phyin ka, 125a:1.

²¹¹ Cited in Nāgārjuna, *Sūtrasamuccaya*; Toh 3934, Tengyur, dbu ma ki. 206a:1.

²¹² *Āryamañjuśrīvikurvāṇaparivarta*; Toh 97, Kangyur, mdo sde kha, 251a:2.

²¹³ *Ajātaśatrukaukṛṭṭyavinodhana*; Toh 216, Kangyur, mdo sde tsha, 267b:5.

on the basis of both or either of the two faults this will serve as an obstacle for so many merits. For example, master Vasubhandu states:

Therefore, those who expound the Dharma erroneously and expound it with afflicted mind yearning for gifts, honor and fame, they shall undermine their own great merits.²¹⁴

The same is true here as well. Since on the part of the listener too it is important that their motivation is pure and that they do not apprehend the meaning erroneously, so both [teacher and student] should ensure that, in the least, a minimum degree of qualifications is present at the time of teaching and listening.

v) HOW SUCHNESS OF DEPENDENT ORIGATION IS EXPOUNDED

This has three sections:

- (1) How this is presented in the perfect scriptures
- (2) How that point referred to by the scriptures is established by reason
- (3) The subdivisions of emptiness, the established conclusion

The first has two parts:

- (a) Citing how it was taught in the scriptures
- (b) Identifying the opposing forces of understanding suchness

(a) HOW SUCHNESS OF DEPENDENT ORIGATION IS PRESENTED IN THE PERFECT SCRIPTURES

The *Ten Grounds Sūtra* states:

When the bodhisattva on the fifth grounds enters the sixth ground he does so by means of ten perfect equanimities of phenomena. What are these ten? They are the following: (1) The perfect equanimity of all phenomena in their absence of signs, (2) the perfect equanimity of all phenomena in their absence of defining characteristics, likewise that of their (3) absence of birth, (4) of being unborn, (5) of isolation, (6) of being primordially pure, (7) of being absent of elaborations, (8) the perfect equanimity of the absence affirmation and rejection, and (9) the perfect equanimity of all phenomena in their resemblance to an illusion, to a dream, to a mirage, to an echo, to a reflection of moon in water, to a reflection and to a conjuration, and (10) the perfect equanimity of all phenomena in their absence of the duality of entity and non-entity. When he realizes the nature of all

²¹⁴ *Abhidharmakośabhaṣya*, chapter 4; Toh 4090, Tengyur, mngon pa ku, 225b:6.

phenomena in such terms, because of his sharp and harmonious forbearance, he shall attain the sixth ground, The Manifest.²¹⁵

“Likewise” indicates that [the phrase] “all phenomena” must be extended up to the “absence of affirmation and rejection.” These two [absence of affirmation and rejection] constitute one perfect equanimity, the equanimities in terms of their resemblance to the seven, such as an illusion, should be taken as one perfect equanimity, and the last two should also be considered as one. The identification of the ten perfect equanimities seems to be different even between the *Commentary on the Ten Grounds Sūtra* and the *Bodhisattva Grounds*.²¹⁶ Since those two texts and the tradition here differ in their interpretation of emptiness, here the [ten perfect equanimities] are explained differently.

Of these, the first refers to the fact of all phenomena being equal in that all the diverse signs that are perceived are absent from the perspective of the meditative equipoise of the Noble One. The second refers to the equanimity of all phenomena in that they are absent of existence by virtue of intrinsic characteristics. These two represent a general presentation. The other eight present in terms of differentiating in their particularities the very truth thus explained in general. For instance, the “absence of birth” is from the perspective of future and “unborn” from that of another temporal standpoint. That all phenomena are equanimous or equal must be understood in the context of other [remaining statements] as well. “Isolation” refers to being empty of to be born and having been born. This in turn must be understood in the sense of being “isolated” as qualified by existence by virtue of intrinsic characteristics, as present in context of the second perfect equanimity. This too is not something that has been temporaneously made so by scripture and reason; rather, they abide so in that they are primordially pure. This is the sixth. With respect to the seventh, the absence of dualistic elaboration should be correlated to the first [qualifier] while the inability of language and conceptualization for elaboration is to be correlated to the the qualifier in the context of the second.²¹⁷ Similar qualification should be applied to the eighth as well. The ninth consists of numerous analogies that help ascertain the truth as explained earlier. The tenth refers to the fact that whatever the phenomena they are all same in lacking intrinsic existence in terms of the duality of entity versus non-entity. “Sharp” refers to swift intelligence, while “harmonious” refers to being in harmony with the forbearance towards the unborn truth of the eighth ground. There appears to be various types of harmonious forbearance depending upon their differing contexts.

Although there are many scriptures that teach the suchness of phenomena, given that the context here is the explanation of how the wisdom of the sixth ground realizes suchness, the citation is made here from the scripture that states how the bodhisattva enters the sixth ground means of ten perfect equanimities.

²¹⁵ *Daśabhumisūtra*; Toh 44, Kangyur, phal chen *kha*, 219a:4. For sake of convenience, I have inserted the numbers of the ten perfect equanimities.

²¹⁶ See, for example, Vasubandhu, Toh 3993, Tengyur, mdo ‘grel *ngi*, 196a:1 and Asaṅga, *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Toh 4037, Tengyur, sems tsam *wi*, 178a:4.

²¹⁷ This “first” and “second” refer to the first two perfect equanimities that make the general point about the perfect equanimity of all phenomena. These two, “the absence of signs” and “the absence of intrinsic characteristics” then become the two qualifying phrases in the context of the remaining eight perfect equanimities.

(b) IDENTIFYING THE OPPOSING FORCES OF UNDERSTANDING SUCHNESS

In setting forth all phenomena as being absent of true existence, if one does not understand well what is the criteria of true existence and what is the mode of grasping at true existence, one will definitely err with one's view of emptiness. The *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* states:

Without touching the imputed entity,
The absence of its reality cannot be grasped.²¹⁸

Thus if the imputed entity, namely, the generic concept of the object of negation, does not appear well to one's mind, it has been stated that one cannot grasp well the absence of that object of negation. Therefore, if *true existence* - that which does not exist - and the aspect of that which [the phenomena] are empty of, namely, *the object of negation*, do not appear to one's mind, it would be impossible to ascertain well the nature of the absence of true existence and that of emptiness. For this, it is not adequate to have identified true existence incidentally fabricated by proponents of philosophical tenets or their corresponding graspings at true existence. It is most essential to have identified well the innate grasping at true existence that persists since beginningless and that is present in both whose minds are tempered by philosophical tenets and those whose minds are not thus tempered, as well true existence as grasped at by such [innate mind]. Without identifying this, even if one might engage in negating the object of negation by means of reasoning, it would fail to harm at all the clinging to true existence that persists since beginningless time. One will, therefore, lose the purpose of the context. For this, it is necessary first to identify the grasping at true existence that lies within our own mental continuum, and understand how the [various Middle Way] reasonings operate directly and indirectly in eradicating its object. As for negation and affirmation that are directed only outwards, this has extremely little benefit. In this regard, if one can understand the identification [of the object of negation] according to the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka and Svatantrika-Madhyamaka one will be able to make clear differentiations between the two. Hence, this presentation has two parts:

- (a) Identifying grasping at true existence according to Svatantrika-Madhyamaka school
- (b) Identifying grasping at true existence according to Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka school

The first has three parts:

- (i) Identifying "true existence" and "grasping at true existence"
- (ii) Presenting truth and falsity within the context of worldly [convention] by means of the magical illusion analogy
- (iii) Explaining the analogy by relating it to the actual referent

²¹⁸ Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 9:138; Toh 3871, Tengyur, dbu ma *la*, 36a:6.

(i) *Identifying “true existence” and “grasping at true existence”*

In other reliable treatises of Svantrantika no clear identification of the object of negation is found. However, the *Light of the Middle Way* presents a criterion for conventional existence whose contrary existence can be understood as constituting ultimate or true existence. Now to explain thus, the text states:

With regard to entities that do not really possess essence the erroneous mind reifies characters contrary to this; this is called the “conventional” [*samvṛti*, literally, “concealer”]. Because it is as if *this* obscures suchness or, *through this*, suchness is covered over. As the sūtra states:

The arising of things is on the conventional;
Ultimately they possess no intrinsic nature;
That which is mistaken with respect to no intrinsic nature,
That is accepted to be concealer of final truth.²¹⁹

Because it originates from this [erroneous mind] what is revealed by it and is perceived, namely, all entities that are false, these are called “the conventional only.” This, in turn, comes about due to the ripening of latent propensities towards error that exists since beginningless time. That [mind] reveals entities to all living beings as if they were real in nature which they all come to see. Therefore, all things that are false in nature, that [are posited] by the power of their minds, these are said to exist only on the conventional level.²²⁰

[With respect to the above citation], up to “That is” indicates how beings are mistaken with respect to what are ultimately devoid of intrinsic nature as possessing ultimate existence. From “conventional” to “because” present the meaning of the phrase “concealer of final truth;” here conventional is taken to be the concealer in that it conceals the final truth. Because it originates from grasping at true existence, that which sees what is revealed as truly existent by that grasping at true existence is a thought; it is not a sensory cognition. In the commentary to *The Two Truths* it is stated that true existence that is the object of negation does not appear to sensory perceptions,²²¹ and this remains true here as well. From “This, in turn,” up to “comes about” presents this grasping at true existence to be innate. So “to living beings” is mentioned. As for the minds of these living beings, this is not conceptual thoughts only; it includes the non-conceptual cognitions as well. It is through the power of these two [classes of mind] that things are posited. That they do not exist on the ultimate level and that these false entities exist only on the conventional level is the meaning of the line: “The arising of things is on the conventional.” The meaning here, however, is not that they exist as the concealer, namely as the grasping at true existence. Understood thus, *the existence by virtue of its*

²¹⁹ *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*; Toh 107, Kangyur, mdo sde ca, 274b:5.

²²⁰ Kamalaśīla, *Madhyamāloka*; Toh 3887, Tengyur, dbu ma sa, 228b:1. This passage from Kamalaśīla is cited by Tsongkhapa’s student Khedrup Je in his *sTong mthun chen mo*. For an explanation of this passage by Khedrup Je, see José Cabezon, *A Dose of Emptiness*, pp.141-3.

²²¹ Jñānagarbha, *Satyadvayavivhaṅgavṛtti*; Toh 3882, Tengyur, dbu ma sa, 12a:7.

own objective mode of being and not posited in dependence on appearing to a mind or posited through the power of mind constitutes true, ultimate and final existence. And grasping at this is the innate grasping at true existence.

[Opponent:] If this is so, how do you explain the statement in the *Light of the Middle Way*, “To say that ultimately there is no arising is to say that they [arising, disintegration, and so on] are not established as such by final cognition,” which, through implication, defines ‘ultimate existence’ and ‘[ultimate] arising’ in terms of being established as arising and as existence by rational cognition that pertains to suchness?

[Reply:] Yes, this is true. However it is necessary to understand that within the qualifier “ultimately” there are two senses of the term “ultimate.” (1) One is where the rational cognition in the form of three-fold [understanding of] hearing, reflection and meditation are characterized as the “ultimate” and that phenomena are not established by such [cognitions] in the manner defined earlier. (2) The other is where existence [of thing] by virtue of its own objective mode of being and not posited by the power of mind is defined as “existing ultimately.” Of these two, the first *ultimate* and something established from its perspective do exist; while the second *ultimate* and something established from its perspective both remain impossible. Therefore, although to exist ultimately in the second sense is entailed by to exist ultimately in the first sense, nonetheless, grasping in terms of the first sense of existence is not an innate grasping at true existence; for this form of grasping at true existence requires grasping at existence in the second sense [of ultimate existence]. Failing to make this distinction, there appeared many who held the measure of the object of negation to be something that is capable of withstanding critical analysis or an entity that is capable of such withstanding. Because of this numerous errors seem to have been made, such as, for instance, that the ultimate truth does not exist as a basis or that it is established to be true existence.²²² If, on the other hand, one understands the above distinction well, one will come to appreciate such crucial points as there being no contradiction between such statements as “[something] does not exist as its own essential being or ultimately” and yet maintain that ultimate reality exists and speak of it to be the *essential mode of being* and the *ultimate*.

(ii) *Presenting truth and falsity within the context of worldly [convention] by means of the analogy of magical illusion*

How something exists in virtue of being posited by the power of the mind and something exists without being posited in such manner, the analogy of magical illusion has been hailed as a way of understanding this. So to explain this, when the magician conjures up a horse or an elephant from a rock or a piece of log and so on, of the three types of people present – the magician himself, the spectators whose eyes are affected and the spectators whose eyes remain unaffected – in the first case, there is the perception of a horse or an elephant but no apprehension; in the second case there is both the perception and apprehension, while in the third case there is neither of the two, namely, perception or apprehension of a horse or an elephant. Now, when the basis of conjuring

²²² Although Tsongkhapa does not identify the proponents of these errors, his student Khedrup Jé attributes the first error to the great translator Ngok Loden Sherap (1059-1109) and the second to the logician Chapa Chökyi Sengé (1109-69). See Cabezón, *A Dose of Emptiness*, p.143.

the illusion is perceived as a horse or an elephant – just as when a rope is mistaken for a snake one can say that the rope is a snake to that perception but, in general, it is not a snake – one cannot say that the basis of conjuring the illusion appears as a horse or an elephant merely to an erroneous cognition but, in general, it does not appear as such. For even without such qualification one has to accept that [the rock or the piece of log] is being perceived as a horse or an elephant. If this is not so, it would then be impossible for any error to occur with relation to appearance.

Therefore, one can posit that the basis of conjuring an illusion does appear as a horse or an elephant. For the magician, for example, this is posited by virtue of the fact that this is how it appears to an erroneous perception; it is not posited, however, by virtue of the own mode of existence of the basis of conjuring the illusion. From the perspective of the spectators, the appearance of a horse or an elephant does not seem as if it is posited by the power of the mind; rather, they apprehend the presence of a real horse or an elephant fully occupying spatial dimension on the very spot where it is being perceived. This, then, is [an explanation] of how one apprehends something to be posited by the power of the mind or not posited as such by means of an analogy. So when an appearance arises in relation to a given basis there are two possibilities – one where what appears constitutes its mode of existence as perceived and another where it does not. If one comprehends this well, one will be able to differentiate between what can be a conflation of two standpoints resulting from the notion that when objects are posited by virtue of the power of valid cognition, given that valid cognition is also a state of mind so positing of objects by it constitutes their being posited by the power of the mind as well. In that case, even through the systems of the essentialists true existence would come to be negated.

Here, the meaning of the objects being posited by the power of valid cognition is that the mode of existence of the two classes of objects of cognition is cognized by valid cognition. So this sense and the previous sense are totally different. As for the illusory appearance this is established, according to Yogacāra-Madhyamaka, by self-cognizing direct perception; while, according to Svātrāntika-Madhyamaka that accepts external reality, it is established by sensory perception that apprehends either the basis, such as environs or the void space. That it does not exist in the manner in which it is perceived is established through such reasoning as, “If it does exist in such a manner, this should be seen by the unaffected eyes as well, which is not the case.” When, through negation such as this, this convergence of it appearing as such and it being empty of such is established, it is established to be a falsehood from the perspective of ordinary conventional cognition not seeped in philosophical standpoints. Therefore, this and the cognition that establishes a reflection to be empty of what it appears as do not constitute either coarse or subtle levels of rational cognition [pertaining to suchness]. Even in the case of true existence in the sense of ordinary conventional cognition, when there is the perception of a thing as something its being empty of that does not occur; similarly, when it is empty of being so its perception as that thing does not occur. When the convergence of these two does occur, however, then it is false even in the sense of ordinary conventional cognition.

(iii) Explaining the analogy by relating it to the actual referent

Just like the spectator at a magical show whose eyes are affected, when these outer and inner phenomena appear as truly existent sentient beings grasp at these

phenomena not as posited by virtue of the power of the mind but as positing a mode of existence not posited by the power of the mind, but as possessing a mode of existence in their own right. This is the innate grasping at true existence persisting since beginningless time.

When compared to the mind grasping at object of negation as defined in Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka, this presentation of Svātantrika-Madhyamaka is very coarse and therefore does not constitute the subtle innate grasping at true existence. Nevertheless, when true existence as conceived by such grasping at true existence has been negated through reasoning, then like the magician, one will not apprehend the outer and inner phenomena as possessing a mode of existence not posited by the power of mind and will come to understand them to exist merely as posited by the power of the mind. And it is those which are posited by the power of mind not violated by valid cognition that is accepted to be conventionally existent; it is not the case that whatever happens to be posited by the power of the mind is accepted to be conventionally existent. Although the arising of sprout from its seed is posited by the power of the mind, it is not a contradiction for the sprout to arise from its seed from its own side as well. This is analogous to the basis of conjuring an illusion appears from their own side as a horse or an elephant. In this way one should understand all phenomena that exist on the conventional level. Given that even suchness is posited by the power of the mind that perceives it, there is nothing that is conventionally existent not entailed by this [condition of existing in virtue of the power of mind]. Therefore the correlation “Just as the illusion appears as a horse or an elephant but it is devoid of them, all things, such as vase, appear as vase and so on but are devoid of vase and so on” is certainly not the point of comparison between illusion and other phenomena. Otherwise it will be impossible for anything to be anything; even the relating of the analogy to its referent would be something appears as such but is not an actual relating of the two. Now, at the point when the non-conceptual wisdom of meditative equipoise has arisen, within that perspective all dualistic appearances are calmed. This is analogous to those whose eyes are not affected and thus neither perception nor apprehension of the magical illusion.

Given that there will be no presentation of the unique style of negation through reasoning by Svātantrika-Madhyamaka in the subsequent sections, I shall briefly explain here, in a manner to comprehend, the manner in which phenomena appear as illusion-like according to that tradition.

Now to explain this with respect to things – determining all knowables to be subsumed into the two-fold category of those that exist as *things* and those that exist as *non-things* – things are confined to the classes of those that are material and those that are not. As for the negation of partlessness in the sense of possessing no directional parts, such as east and so on, in the domain of material things, and the negation of partlessness in the sense of the absence of temporal parts, such as prior and subsequent moments, in the domain of consciousness, these one should understand as explained elsewhere.²²³ In this way, establish the entailment that all things possess parts. Next, if the parts and the bearer of the parts are of different entity they will become unrelated, this is rejected and they are thus demonstrated to be of one entity. Now, at this point, regardless of however

²²³ Tsongkhapa is referring the reader here to such classic expositions as Vasubhandu’s critique of atomism in *Thirty Verses*, and to **

much one directs one's thought to a given thing, it becomes undeniable that though being of one entity in reality [parts and their bearer] appear as if they are of different entity. In this way, then, just like a magical illusion, one comes to establish the convergence of the two facts, their appearance as something and their emptiness of it. Now, something like this is not a contradiction for a false mode of existence posited by the power of the mind. This is, however, untenable if that basis possesses a mode of existence that is not posited in virtue of appearing to the mind. This is so because, for a true existence as defined above, it is impossible for there to be a disparity between the way things actually are and the way they appear to be. For if something is a true existence it must invariably remain so shunning falsehood and, furthermore, since the cognition that perceives [the parts and their bearer] to be of different entity would become non-erroneous, this will undermine [the fact of] their being of one entity.

Once this [absence of true existence of things] is established, on the basis of this very same reasoning, true existence of non-things too can be negated. Even with respect to unconditioned space, one will have to accept that it pervades some material objects. There too, one will have to accept that there are parts that pervade the east and parts that pervade other directions. Likewise, with respect to suchness too, it has numerous parts in terms of its extension and numerous distinct parts in terms of being realized by distinct prior or subsequent states of cognition. This is true also of other unconditioned phenomena. Since the multiple parts and their bearer cannot be of different entity, they are of identical entity; and, because this is tenable for a falsehood and not for true existence, as before, [true existence of unconditioned phenomena] is negated. Thus all knowables come to be established as having no true existence. Approaching in this manner is the tradition of Śāntarakṣita and his son [Kamalaśīla]. So to confine the notion of parts and their bearer only to things is a flaw borne of little intelligence.

Now, the sense of falsehood familiar to those whose mind is not tempered with philosophical thinking does not share the same meaning as the sense of falsehood asserted by the Middle Way school. Thus, their sense of "being posited by the mind" too is consonant with the manner in which this is known to them. However, in one's own standpoint, the Middle Way does not do this alone to exhaust [the meaning of] being posited by the mind. Given these [considerations], although there is no mode of existence not posited by the power of appearing to the mind, it is not a contradiction in this [Svātantrika-Madhyamaka] system for there being *a mode of existence that is posited by the power of the mind, which is not a mere imputation or a name*. Because of this there exists for the mind a great deal of difference between the two Middle Way schools with respect to their object of negation. Seeing that, if today's people are [first] lead well through the identification of true existence and grasping at true existence as well a brief [presentation of] reasoning that negates them according to this [Svātantrika-Madhyamaka] and are then presented the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka system, their eyes will come to be excellently opened to the view [of emptiness], I have explained these here.

(b) *Identifying grasping at true existence according to Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka*

If one understands how in this system phenomena are merely posited by the power of conceptualization, it will then be easily discerned how that which apprehends contrary to this will constitute grasping at true existence.

This presentation has two parts:

- (i) How phenomena are posited by the power of conceptualization
- (ii) Demonstrating how grasping at its contrary constitutes grasping at true existence

(i) How phenomena are posited by the power of conceptualization

The Questions of Upāli states:

The flowers that delight so many minds unfold;
The supreme gold mansions are resplendent and attractive –
Here, for none of these, there is a creator;
They're posited by the power of conceptualization.
Through conceptualization the world is imputed.²²⁴

Thus phenomena are taught to be posited by the power of conceptualization. There are many other occasions where phenomena are described as being mere imputation of conceptualization and as being posited by virtue of conceptualization. The *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* too states:

Since the Buddhas have stated
That the world is conditioned by ignorance,
So why is it not reasonable that
This world is [a product of] conceptualization?²²⁵

In its commentary the meaning of this [verse] is explained in terms of the world being a mere conceptual imputation and not existing in its own right.²²⁶ The *Four Hundred Stanzas on the Middle Way* also states:

Without conceptualization if attachment
And so on do not exist by themselves,
As for “final referents” and “conceptualization,”
What intelligent person would grasp at these?²²⁷

In its commentary too it states:

Only on the basis of the presence of conceptualization they exist and without conceptualization their existence does not come to be. These are, without doubt,

²²⁴ *Upāliarīpṛcchānāmamahāyānasūtra*; Toh 68, Kangyur, dkon brtsegs ca, 129b:5.

²²⁵ Nāgārjuna, *Yuktiśaṣṭikākārikā*, 37; Toh 3825, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, 21b:6.

²²⁶ Candrakīrti, *Yuktiśaṣṭikāvṛtti*; Toh 3864, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 3a:6.

²²⁷ Āryadeva, *Catuhśastakākārikā*, 8:3; Toh 3846, dbu ma tsha, 9a:6.

like the snake imputed upon a coiled rope, definitely not established in their own right.²²⁸

“Final referents” refers to existence in its own right, while “conceptualization” arises in relation to this. The statement in this commentary about how attachment and so on resembles imputation of a snake upon a rope is only an illustration. It presents also how all phenomena too are posited by conceptualization like the imputation of a snake upon a rope.

For instance with respect to a rope that looks like a snake because of its multicolored pattern as well as the manner in which it is coiled, when it is seen in an area that is not well lit, the thought “This is a snake” may rise. There is, at that instant, on the part of the rope, not the slightest basis, whether in terms of a collection or in terms of its parts, something that can be identified as an example of a snake. Therefore, this snake is merely a conceptual imputation. Similarly, when, in dependence upon the aggregates the thought “I am” arises, on the part of the aggregates – whether in terms of a collection of earlier and latter continuums or in terms of a collection of simultaneous [factors] – as well as the parts, there is not even the slightest [basis] that can be posited as an illustration of this [“I”]. Extensive explanation of this will appear later. Because of this [reason] and also because there is not even a slightest [thing] that is of different entity from the aggregates – be it in terms of their parts or in terms of the bearer of these parts – which can be taken to be its basis, so this “I” is merely posited by conceptualization in dependence upon the aggregates; it has no existence in its own right. This has been stated in the *Precious Garland* as well:

The individual is not the earth or the water;
He is not the fire, not wind, or the space;
He is not the consciousness so if he is not all these,
Yet apart from these where is the individual?²²⁹

“Individual” refers to the person, the sentient being, the “I,” or the “self.” “Not the earth” and so on up to “not the consciousness” refutes the postulation of the six elements of the sentient being, which are its parts, as being the person, while “not all these” negates the collection of these elements as being the person. The final line [in the verse] refutes the postulation of something that is a different entity from these elements as being the person. Nevertheless, it is not the case that one does not accept the [existence of] person; nor is it the case one accepts foundational consciousness and so on to be the person. Therefore, just as it has been interpreted by the author of our commentary, Noble [Nāgārjuna] too accepts [this standpoint on the identity of the person].

If one understands in this manner how the person is conceptually posited, [one will understand] how the manner in which all other phenomena are conceptually posited is the same. *King of Meditations* states:

Just as what you’ve discerned with respect to the self,

²²⁸ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 133a:6.

²²⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 1:80; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 109b:7.

So must you mentally extend this to all things.²³⁰

And the noble *Condensed [Perfection of Wisdom]* too states:

Just as with the self so understand all sentient beings;
Just as with sentient beings so understand all phenomena.²³¹

The *Precious Garland* also states this clearly in the following:

Since the person is a composite of six elements,
It has no final reality and likewise
Since each of the elements is in turn
A composite they do not exist with final reality.²³²

The meaning of the first line is to state [the reason] “Because the person is designated in dependence upon the collection of the six elements.” The meaning of the third and the fourth lines is to state that since it is impossible [for something] not to have parts and bearer of the parts, each of the elements are in turn designated in dependence upon the collection of many constitutive parts. Therefore, they do not exist on the level of final reality or by virtue of their own essence. Furthermore, if they are designated in dependence on the collection of their constitutive parts, the parts and the bearer of the parts cannot be identified as the thing itself, yet it is impossible for something that is of different entity from these to be the thing as well.

Now, insofar as the manner in which vase and so on are conceptually posited is concerned, on that aspect at least, this is similar to [the case of] imputing a snake upon a rope. However, between the vase and so on on the one hand and the rope-snake on the other, they are totally different in terms of whether they are existent or not and whether they are capable of effective functions, and so on. This is because, with respect to whether or not their conventions must be necessarily used and whether or not the usage of such conventions is susceptible to invalidation [by other instances of knowledge], these two examples differ in all possible ways. As to how relevant transactions are tenable in this conceptually posited [world], on this point, among the commentators of the words and meaning [of the Middle Way treatises], the system of interpreting Noble Nāgārjuna and his son [Āryadeva] of the three masters – Buddhapaṇita, /antideva and this master [Candrakīrti] – remains unique. This [question] is in fact also the most difficult point of the view of the Middle Way.

Understood thus, just as the *Precious Garland* states in the following that, how on the ultimate level, not even the mere names exist and that nothing whatsoever exists except for what is posited on the conventional level by the power of the conventions such as names, [things] remain only designated names.

Because material things are mere names,
The space too is a mere name;

²³⁰ *Samadhirājāsūtra*, chapter 12; Toh 127, Kagyur, mdo sde da, 44a:2.

²³¹ *Prajñāpāramitāsamcayagāthā*; Toh 13, shes phyin ka, 3a:6.

²³² Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 1:81; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 110a:1.

How can there be matter with no elements?
Therefore mere names too do not exist.

Feeling, discrimination and volition,
Consciousness, contemplate these
Just like the elements or the self;
Therefore the six elements have no selfhood.²³³

And

Apart from the designated conventions,
What is there for the purpose of the world
That which is existent or non-existent?²³⁴

If one understands these well, one will comprehend well the following points: (1) How phenomena needs be posited dependently, (2) that how the by the very virtue of their being dependently designated and having arisen through dependence they have no existence in their own right, (3) how they do not possess an independent nature something that is not posited through the power of conventions other [than themselves], and (4) no matter what phenomenon it may be, when it is being posited as existent, it is done so without searching for the true reference of that designation.

(ii) Demonstrating how grasping at its contrary constitutes grasping at true existence

To grasp at [things as] existent, not posited by the power of conventions such as name alone as described above, constitutes innate grasping at [things as] *true, ultimate, real* existence, *existing by virtue of their own essence, existing by virtue of their own characteristics*, and as *intrinsic existence*. The grasped object of this [mind] is, hypothetically speaking, the measure of true existence. As to the point that one must recognize that there are two senses to the [term] “ultimate” in the context of qualifying the object of negation with the term “ultimately,” it is the same here as well.²³⁵ Although the proponents of Svātantrika-Madhyamaka maintain that within the objects of knowledge existence in terms of the [first] three – true existence and so on – remain impossible, nonetheless they accept the existence on the conventional of the [remaining] three – existing by virtue of one’s own essence and so on. I see this [Svātantrika perspective] to be an instance of great skilful means to help guide those who are, for the time being, not capable of realizing easily the extremely subtle suchness.

Thus the reality of phenomena which is not dependent upon another, namely upon a subject, a convention-making conceptualization – in other words an intrinsic nature that is not posited by the power [of such conceptualization] - this intrinsic nature is called “the

²³³ Nāgārjuna, *Ratnavālī*, 2:99; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 110b:3.

²³⁴ Ibid., 2:13; Toh 4158, Tengyur, spring yig ge, 111a:4.

²³⁵ This is a cross reference to an earlier part of the text (p.*) where, in identifying the object of negation according to Madhyamaka-Svatantrika, Tsongkhapa distinguished between the two senses of the term “ultimate.” For philosophical implications of this distinction between the two senses of the term, see Thupten Jinpa, *Self, Reality and Reason in Tibetan Philosophy: Tsongkhapa’s Quest for the Middle Way*, especially pp.46-49.

selfhood that is to be negated.” The absence of this [intrinsic nature] upon a person as its basis has been taught to be the selflessness of person while its absence upon phenomena, such as eyes and so on, has been taught to be the selflessness of phenomena. From this one can implicitly discern that grasping at such an intrinsic nature upon the person and upon phenomena as the two self-grasplings. This is as declared in the following in the *Commentary on the Four Hundred Stanzas*:

Here, what is referred to as “self” is that intrinsic nature, namely the nature of things [conceived of] as not dependent upon others; the absence of this is the selflessness. Because of the twofold distinction of persons and phenomena this [selflessness] is understood in terms of two, namely the selflessness of phenomena and the selflessness of person.²³⁶

Here too [in *Entering the Middle Way* Candrakīrti] states:

Through division into person and phenomena it’s taught to be two-fold.²³⁷

Thus it has been explained that the two selflessnesses are not distinguished on the basis of what is to be negated but from the point of view of their basis, namely the subject [upon which emptiness is being realized]. As for innate egoistic view of self-grasping, since in the root text the aggregates have been rejected to be its object of focus, and in the commentary the self that is dependently designated has been stated to be its object of focus, one should take the mere “I” or the mere person that is the object of focus giving rise to the thought “I am” to be its object. As for its aspect, the autocommentary states:

By holding on to “I” one imputes a self that does not exist and thinks that self exists and manifestly clings onto it as real.²³⁸

So, as stated here, it grasps that “I” to be truly existent. Furthermore, the commentary states:

The egoistic view refers to an afflicted intelligence that engages with aspects as “I” and “mine.”²³⁹

Therefore, as described here, for the object of focus of innate egoistic view it must be something that spontaneously gives rise to the thought “I am.” Thus although the innate grasping at persons who are of separate continuum as existing by virtue of their own characteristics constitutes a grasping at selfhood of person, it is not an innate egoistic view. The phrase “engaging with such aspects as ‘I’ and ‘mine’” does not presents that mere “I” and mere “mine” to be the objects of apprehension [of the egoistic view]; rather, it indicates [such a view] to possess the aspect of grasping at these two [“I” and “mine”]

²³⁶ Candrakīrti, *Catuhśatakaṭikā*; Toh 3865, Tengyur, dbu ma ya, 190a:2.

²³⁷ MA 6:179; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 213a:6.

²³⁸ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 292a:7.

²³⁹ Ibid., p.292b:7.

as existing by virtue of their own characteristics. The object of focus of innate egoistic view grasping at “mine” is the “mine” itself; one should not, however, take the eyes and so on to be its object. As for its apprehending aspect, it grasps at “mine” as existing by virtue of its own character on the basis of taking it as an object.

[Question:] If this so, how is it that in the autocommentary related to the line “This thing of ‘mine’”²⁴⁰ [Candrakīrti writes] “Thinking ‘This is mine,’ one manifestly clings to all the things that are other than the object of grasping at ‘I,’”²⁴¹ stating that clinging ‘This is mine’ on the basis of focusing on bases such as the eyes and so on to be a grasping at “mine”?

[Reply:] The meaning here is that one, having perceived the eyes and so on as “mine,” manifestly clings at the “mine” as real; it is not the case that eyes and so on, which are instances of the “mine,” to be the object of focus. Otherwise egoistic view and grasping at selfhood of phenomena will not be mutually exclusive.

As for the object of focus of innate grasping at selfhood of phenomena, this includes self and other’s aggregate of form and so on, the eyes, ears and so on, as well as the external environment that is not part of the inner world. Its aspect of apprehension is the same as explained before [in the context of grasping at selfhood of person].

The grasping at these two selves constitutes the ignorance that binds one in the cycle of existence. The *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* states:

Things arisen from cause and conditions,
That which conceives these to be real,
This, the Teacher taught to be ignorance;
From this emerge the twelve links.²⁴²

Thus taking the things and phenomena as one’s objects and grasping at them as existing with final reality has been stated to be the ignorance which is the root of cyclic existence. And since from this grasping at selfhood of phenomena ensues ignorance grasping at selfhood of person, it has been taught that from this [grasping] the twelve [links of dependent origination] come into being. In order for that ignorance to cease, it is necessary to see how it is empty of the manner in which it apprehends and how the self thus apprehended does not exist. The *Seventy Stanzas* states:

Seeing reality as one realizes excellently
The things as empty, one will not be confused;
Then ignorance comes to cease;
From this the twelve links will cease [as well].²⁴³

Hymns to the Ultimate Expanse states:

²⁴⁰ MA 1:3b; for Tsongkhapa’s own commentary on this line, see p.*

²⁴¹ *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, 223a:5.

²⁴² Nāgārjuna, *Śūnyatāsaptatīkārīkā* 64; Toh 3827, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, 26b:2.

²⁴³ Ibid., 65; p.26b:4.

Grasping at “self” and “mine,”
So long one conceptualizes the “external,”
When one sees the two selflessness,
The seed of cyclic existence will cease.²⁴⁴

And:

That which supremely purifies the mind,
This teaching is that no intrinsic existence.²⁴⁵

The *Four Hundred Stanzas* too states:

When one sees no-self in the objects,
The seed of cyclic existence will cease.²⁴⁶

And:

Therefore all afflictions will be destroyed as well
Through the destruction of delusion;
This [truth of] dependent origination,
When seen, delusion will emerge no more.

Therefore with all your efforts
Engage in this discourse alone.²⁴⁷

Since the context here is that of identifying the delusion within the three poisons, the delusion being referred to here the affliction of ignorance. And for that ignorance to cease, it is being stated here that one needs to realize the profound truth of dependent origination whereby emptiness arises in terms of dependent origination. The author of our commentary too writes “Hence the yogi puts negates the self,”²⁴⁸ and states how it is necessary to realize selflessness on the basis of eradicating the object of self-grasping. Therefore, without eradicating the object of self-grasping, if one were to simply withdraw the mind from going after its object, this cannot be taken as entering no-self. The reason for this is the following. When the mind engages with an object there are three modes – (1) apprehending that object of focus as truly existent, (2) apprehending it as not truly existent, and (3) apprehending it without qualifying in either of these terms. Therefore, just as it is not necessary to apprehend [something as] not truly existent even though one does not apprehend it as truly existent, likewise even though one does not engage with either of the two forms of selfhood, it does not necessarily entail that it engages with the

²⁴⁴ Nāgārjuna, *Dharmadhātustava* 64; Toh 1118, Tengyur, stod tshogs ka.p.66a:3.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 26cd; p.64b:5.

²⁴⁶ Āryadeva, *Catuhśastakakārikā*, 14:25; Toh 3846, dbu ma tsha, 16a:5.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 6:11; p.7a:3.

²⁴⁸ MA 6:120; p.210b:4.

two selflessnesses. This is because there are countless instances where the mind remains within the third perspective.

With regard to the two self-graspings as well, one should identify these on the basis of one's own mental continuum, and on this basis, establish the very basis in relation to which one is deluded that it does not exist in the manner in which it is being grasped at. As for refutation and affirmation directed to the outside, since these are like looking in the meadows for the footprints of a robber who has fled into the woods, they will not be effective at all. Thus, when one has identified the grasping at true existence well, one will come to recognize that there are numerous instances of thought that do not constitute grasping at true existence. Therefore, all misconceptions associated with the assertion that all objects apprehended by conceptual thoughts, whatever they may be, are to be negated by the reasoning that enquires into suchness. Although there are so many issues arising from this [point] that needs to be discussed, some of these have already been discussed many times elsewhere and some I shall address later. I shall, therefore, not elaborate any further here.

Sixth Ground II Establishing Selflessness of Phenomena

(2) How that point referred to by scriptures is established by reason

This has two parts:

- (a) Establishing selflessness of phenomena through reasoning
- (b) Establishing selflessness of person through reasoning

The first has four parts:

- (i) Refuting the arising from four extremes on both levels of truth
- (ii) Repudiation of objections against refuting thus
- (iii) How arising through dependent origination itself prevents the distortions of adhering to extreme views
- (iv) Identifying the fruits of having engaged in analysis through reasoning

The first has three parts:

- 1' Stating the proposition of “no arising by virtue of intrinsic nature”
- 2' Presenting the proofs that establish this through reasoning
- 3' The conclusion of having negated arising from the four extremes

1' Stating the proposition of “no arising by virtue of intrinsic nature”

With the understanding that by presenting, out of the ten perfect equanimities, the perfect equanimity of the absence of arising by virtue of intrinsic nature alone through reasoning, the other perfect equanimities can be presented easily, Noble Nāgārjuna states the following at the beginning of his treatise on the Middle Way:

Not from itself, not from other,
Not from both nor from no cause –
Any thing anywhere
Ever possesses arising at all.²⁴⁹

“Ever” is a synonym of “by any means,” while the word “anywhere,” which is synonymous to the phrase “on any occasion,” is a locative presenting the basis where there is no arising, so it indicates place, time and philosophical standpoints. To indicate the locus that does not arise in any of these three terms, the word “any thing” of the inner

²⁴⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, 1:3; Toh 3824, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, p.1b:3.

and outer world is mentioned. Thus the meaning of this stanza “Not from itself” and so on is the following:

“It is impossible for the things of the outer and inner world to arise from itself at any place, at any time, and through any philosophical standpoints.” This is how one should predicate [the thesis] and explain. Similarly, one should extend this [predication], in the following manner, to the other three propositions as well: “It is not ever possible for the things to arise other, from both [itself and other] and from no cause.” Although in [Tibetan version of] the *Clear Words* this phrase is translated as “from itself anything whatsoever...” the translation found here is better.²⁵⁰

The thought “Could this be similar to the case where, because of place grapes do not grow in some areas and, because of time, crops do not grow during some seasons” is refuted by the phrase “at any place or at any time,” so the inclusion the word “never” is not pointless. The thought “Although things does not arise [in such terms] from the standpoint of the Middle Way school, they arise so due to the philosophical standpoint of essentialist schools” is refuted by the phrase “in terms of any philosophical standpoint.” This is not, however, to state that things do not arise according to the essentialist schools. The autocommentary states:

Here, this term “not” is to be related to *arising from itself*, namely the proof of existence, and not with existence per se for the negation of that is effected by means of implication.²⁵¹

The meaning of this should not be taken in such a way that it suggests to a division of [Nāgārjuna’s stanza] with the last two lines stating the thesis and the first two presenting the argument. Rather, the suggestion is to apply the predication as “There is no arising from itself” and extend this correlation to the other three [theses] as well. Given that if there is an arising by virtue of intrinsic nature, then for its evidence, one will have to accept arising from any of the four extremes, so [arising from the four extremes] is referred to as the “proof of existence.” When arising from the four extremes is negated, through this force the negation of arising by virtue of intrinsic nature too is effected, there is no flaw of not establishing the absence of intrinsic arising when predicated in this way. This is the meaning of the last word [“implication”]. Therefore, I am not saying that it is incorrect to take the negation of arising from the four extremes as the reasoning to establish the absence of intrinsic arising, as stated in *Light of the Middle Way*;²⁵² what I am saying is that to separate [the lines] as described above is the intended meaning of [Nāgārjuna’s] text.

“Things do not arise from other at any place, time or because of any philosophical tenet” is how the predication is applied, and similarly, the *Clear Words* states:

²⁵⁰ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, p.5a:1. Tsongkhapa is referring here to Patsap’s translation of *Clear Words*, where one reads the phrase “‘Therefore, from itself, anything whatsoever has no arising in any terms.’ This is how the predication should be applied.”

²⁵¹ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*; Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, p.246b:7.

²⁵² See, for example, Kamalaśīla, *Madhyamakāloka*; Toh 3887, Tengyur, dbu ma sa, p.190a:3.

We accept the conventional to be established by means of mere conditionedness, but not on the basis of adhering to the four standpoints. Doing so will have the consequence of speaking of things as being endowed with intrinsic nature.²⁵³

As stated here, “arising from another” is not a convention of the scriptures; rather it is a convention of the philosophical systems. It is spoken of with the intention of referring to *other* that exists by virtue of its own characteristics. Therefore, if one accepts this one comes to speak of [things as being] endowed with intrinsic nature. In this system [of Candrakīrti], however, *arising from other* does not exist even on the conventional level. Although we accept on the conventional level the cause and effects to be of different entity, this does not constitute the meaning of *arising from other*. This is analogous to the case of how although, as stated [in the context of] how each phenomenon bears two natures, nature does exist, one does not accept this to be that of the nature of intrinsic arising.

In *Clear Words* there is the statement that the thesis that things are absent of arising from themselves is a non-implicative negation; this is true also of other three propositions. Therefore, when establishing the absence of intrinsic existence the thesis to be established is a non-implicative negation, namely the simple elimination of the object of negation. This is as stated in the following in *The Clear Words*:

Since statements, such as “Whatever sounds there are in the world/ ‘They are all unreal’ and ‘nothing exists,’” are found, the intention is to express the negation without implication. So, the meaning of “unreality” [here] is in the sense of absence of intrinsic existence.²⁵⁴

Autocommentary states:

Having stated the four theses, now to establish these through reasoning, I shall explain...²⁵⁵

Later on, using the negation of arising from the four extremes as the reason things are spoken of as being free of intrinsic arising. Furthermore, at the end of negating the arising from the four extremes, in the *Clear Words* too it states “Thus, this establishes [the fact that] there is no arising.”²⁵⁶ [148] It is not the case, therefore, that [Candrakīrti] does not agree that things being devoid of intrinsic arising is established.

The statement in the *Clear Words*, “The inferences have as their effect only the negation of what others propose,”²⁵⁷ refers to the fact that propositions are there only to refute intrinsic existence adhered to by the other, and the sense here is that, apart from this, they do not establish anything else. The statement does not, however, reject the establishment of that mere negation. Likewise, there is the following statement:

²⁵³ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, chapter 1, Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, p.11a:4.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., chapter 15; p.93b:7.

²⁵⁵ Candrakīrti, *Madhyamakāvatārabhaṣya*, Toh 3863, Tengyur, dbu ma, ‘a, p.257a:1.

²⁵⁶ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, chapter 1, Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, p.12b:4.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., p.11a:4.

As for us, we do not establish this to be non-existent and existent; rather, we refute what others impute to be existent and non-existent. This is because our wish is to clear away the two extremes and establish the path of the middle way.²⁵⁸

The meaning of this statement too is that one merely eliminates the two extremes of existence and non-existence as adhered to by the other and, apart from this, nothing else is established. It is not the case however that the simple negation of the two extremes is not established; for it has been stated that one clears away the two extremes and establishes the path of the middle way. If things are not absent of intrinsic existence, then since there is no third possibility things will have intrinsic existence. This is clearly stated in the following in *Averting the Objections*:

Because, if what is devoid of intrinsic nature
Negates the absence of intrinsic nature,
Then with cessation of absence of intrinsic existence,
Things will become intrinsic existence.²⁵⁹

As for the reasons why, although one accepts the thesis and proof such as these one does not become a Svātantrika-Madhyamaka, these I have explained extensively elsewhere. So I shall not elaborate here further.

What then are the definitions of the two forms of negation? In general, negation is cognized by the mind on the basis of explicit elimination of the relevant object of negation. So the elimination of what is not itself, such as the mere elimination of the object of negation in actual fact is not a negation. On the other hand there are terms like “ultimate reality” and “ultimate truth,” where the words do not explicitly eliminate the object of negation, however when their reference appears to the mind, they do so in the aspect of eliminating conceptual elaborations. These are negations.

This negation is of two kinds.²⁶⁰ Of these two the non-implicative negation does not imply or affirm any other fact following the explicit elimination of the object of negation. For example, when asked “Are Brahmins allowed to drink alcohol or not?” the statement “They do not drink alcohol” is a mere elimination of the drinking of alcohol. It does not affirm in anyway that they do or do not drink other beverages. The implicative negation, on the other hand, implies or affirms other facts following the elimination of the object of negation by the mind. For example, when wishing to demonstrate that one of the two individuals belongs to the commoner’s caste, the statement “He is not a

²⁵⁸ Candrakīrti, *Prasannapadā*, chapter 20; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma ‘a, p.127b:3.

²⁵⁹ Nāgārjuna, *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, 26; Toh 3828, Tengyur, dbu ma tsa, p.27a:6.

²⁶⁰ For Tsongkhapa, the appreciation of the distinction between constructive and negative propositions in general and the difference between the two forms of negation – implicative and non-implicative – is of vital importance to understanding Nāgārjuna’s teachings on emptiness. Given the centrality of this point, we find separate treatment of the topic of negation three of Tsongkhapa’s major works on the Middle Way philosophy, namely his *Essence of Eloquence*, *Ocean of Reasoning* and this work, *Elucidation of the Intent*. For further discussion on the role of the logical analysis of the forms of negation in the Middle Way philosophy’s overall project of refuting intrinsic existence according to Tsongkhapa, see my *Self, Reality and Reason in Tibetan Philosophy*, especially pp.57-63.

Brahmin” does not merely negate being a Brahmin; it also affirms that he is of a caste different from the Brahmins, which, on the basis of hearing [the statement], is established as of being a commoner’s caste.

There are three ways in which another fact may be implied – through direct implication, indirectly and by means of the context. First is like the statement “No self exists,” for instance, whereby the elimination of the object of negation and affirmation of other facts are both effected with a single word. The second is like the statement “The fat Dharmadatta does not eat during the day,” for example, where [another fact] is indicated indirectly through implication. These two are, respectively, specific examples of implying [another fact] directly or indirectly. An example where [a fact] is implied both directly and indirectly is the statement “The Dharmadatta who does not eat during the day remains not skinny.” The third type is like the statement “He is not a Brahmin” in the context where, the person is deemed to be either royal or of Brahmin caste but which specifically he is has not been determined yet. Here the statement is not explicitly made. A text cited in *Explanation of the Commentary on the Lamp of Wisdom* states:

Negation that reveals by implication,
That which affirms by means of one word,
That which bears [both], and does not express its own term –
These are implicative [negation], others are different.²⁶¹

Some assert that when [a negative term] is combined with a term that is affirmative, it is not a non-implicative negation. This is incorrect. Just because the term “Brahmin” is affirmative does not negate the fact that the statement “Brahmins do not drink alcohol” is a mere elimination of its object of negation. Just as, for example, just because sound is an evident fact this does not negate the fact that sound being impermanent is a concealed fact. Others assert that when [the negation] is combined with the subject [of the proposition], then some other fact is being implied. This too is incorrect. Brahmin, for example, is the basis upon which one considers whether or not some other fact is being implied; it is [certainly] not that other fact that is being implied.

Thus, to present Noble Nāgārjuna’s four propositions, [Candrakīrti writes]:

It does not originate from itself, how can it do so from other?

It does not do so from both, how can there be [anything] from no cause?

It is not the case that the effect originates from its own essence; how can it originate from other causes that exist by virtue of their own characteristics – that is to say that it does not. It does not originate both self and other; and how can it originate from no cause [at all] – that is to say that it does not.

If there there exist things that possess intrinsic existence, there is the entailment that they arise in terms of one of the four extremes. This is because intrinsic arising is exhausted within the two possibilities of there being a cause or no cause, and within the possibility of their being a cause, this is confined within the following three possibilities –

²⁶¹ Avalokitacrata, *Prajñāpradīpāṭikā*; Toh 3860, Tengyur, dbu ma wa, p.63b:6.

arising from oneself, from other or from the combination of the both. Therefore these four propositions are exhaustive.

2' Presenting the proofs that establish this by means of reasoning

This has four parts:

- a' Refuting arising from itself
- b' Refuting arising from another
- c' Refuting arising from both
- d' Refuting arising from no cause

The first has two parts:

- i' Refuting with the reasonings of the commentary's author
- ii' Refuting with the reasonings of the *Fundamental Wisdom*

The first has three parts:

- 1'' Refuting the position of other philosophers who claim to realize suchness
- 2'' Demonstrating how [arising from itself] does not exist even conventionally from the perspective of the philosophically unaffected mind
- 3'' Summarizing the essential points of these refutations

*The first has two parts:

- a'' Refuting arising from a cause that is of identical entity [151]
- b'' Refuting that cause and effects are of identical entity

The first has three parts:

- i'' How if [the effect] arises from a cause that is of identical entity, there follows the consequence of meaninglessness
- ii'' How if it arises from [a cause] that is of identity entity, this contradicts reason
- iii'' Rejecting the defences aimed at removing these flaws

The first is as follows.

**Not originating from itself, as for originating another, how can this be?
Not also from both, how can there be from without a cause?**

[Question:] On what grounds can one ascertain that things do not arise from themselves?

[Response:] If the sprout, which is the agent of the act of arising of something that is in the process of arising, originates from its own reality, there will be no additional benefit

at all for its coming into being in such a manner. This is because the reality of the sprout, which is its existence, has already been obtained before at the time of its cause.

Here, the Sa'khyas maintain that diverse causes and conditions share a single common effect and this will be impossible if there is no primal substance, one shared nature of these causes and conditions, that pervade them all. Therefore whatever is the nature of the cause, the barley grain, is also the nature of the conditions, such as water and fertilizer; likewise, the nature of the sprout and the natures of its causes and conditions too are mutually inclusive. They maintain this to be the nature of all manifestations. Therefore, since they accept the seed and the sprout to be mutually distinct from each other, they do not assert that the sprout arises from the sprout. Nevertheless, when they assert that the sprout arises from the seed and its nature, since the two natures are identical, it arises from its own nature and that it is the unmanifest sprout that exists at the time of the cause which arises [when it sprouts]. This is manner in which self-arising is accepted. Although some segment of Sa'khyas do not speak of "arising" they assert what is unmanifest comes to be manifest from the cause, the meaning remains the same.

This is also the manner in which they accept the universal and its particulars to be of the same entity; this is utterly different from the Buddhist's standpoint that the thing and vase are of the identical entity. Thus, if all the reality or nature [152] of the sprout exist at the time of the seed, since it is impossible for there to be a manifest sprout that is of different matter from the reality of the sprout, not only the nature or the reality of the sprout, even the sprout itself will have to be present from the time of the cause. At that point, after its having come into being, there is no point it to arise once again.

ii" How if it arises from [a cause] that is of identity entity, this contradicts reason

This is as follows.

The rearing of that which had arisen is not logical too.

It is not logical for what has already arisen to arise once again after having already arisen in the manner of repetition. The conjunctive "too" indicates that not only will the arising become pointless if [things] arise from their own natures. Even if one upholds the manifesting thesis, if the manifest effect is present at the time of the cause, this contradicts one's own premise. If, on the other hand, it is not present, one could analyze whether the manifest effect and its nature are identical or different. One refute this in this manner.

Given that the statement "Self arising is contrary to reason" alone is a mere proposition, to present the reasoning to refute it, the following is stated:

**If one conceives the already arisen to arise once again,
The birth of sprouts and so on will never be obtained here;
The seed will continue to grow until the end of existence.**

If one thoroughly conceives of – that is assert – the seed that has already arisen to repeat its birth once again, on what ground will one assert that this repeated arising of the seed will be stopped and the sprout will arise? What obstacle is there for the seed to arise again? There is none. So the birth of the sprout and so on, which include its stalk and its bending blades, can never be obtained in this world. Another flaw is that the seed will perpetually arise without interruption until the end of the cyclic existence. Because what has already arisen must arise once again. This demonstrates two flaws, that the effect and its identical continuum will not arise [at all] and that the identical continuum of the cause will arise with no interruption [at all], and exposes it [i.e. the thesis of self-arising] is contrary to reason.

iii” Rejecting the defences aimed at removing these flaws

This is as follows.

How would the seed be utterly destroyed by it [the sprout]?

If they maintain that for the sprout to grow there are the beneficial conditions, such as water, spring time and so on, which transform the seed into something resembling a fermented grain [153] and in this way they produce the sprout. On the part of the sprout too, it is contrary for it to be present together with the seed, which brings it into being. So it originates from the cessation of the seed. Therefore, the two flaws of being contrary to reason do not apply [for them]. Furthermore, since the seed and the sprout are not of different nature or entity, it is also not the case that things do not arise from themselves.

This too is untenable. Given that the two natures – that is the nature of the seed and that of the sprout – are identical in all possible respects, how can that sprout bring about the destruction of that seed? This is not possible. Just as the sprout cannot bring about the destruction of the sprout. This is the intention [of Candrakīrti] here.

That they do not reverse [their standpoint] despite seeing such flaws is due to their obstunence of arguing with the thought that the sprout’s destruction of the seed is on the level of manifestation so how can this be similar to something destroying itself. However, if all the realities and natures become mutually inclusive of each other, the distinctedness of manifestations too cannot be established. So the injury [to the thesis] cannot be removed.

a” Refuting that cause and effects being of identical entity

This has three parts:

i” Refuting by means of the consequence that the seed and the sprout will not have distinct shapes and so on

ii” Refuting the responses aimed at repudiating the objections

iii” Refuting by means of the consequence that during each of the two situations the grasping or non-grasping of both remains the same

The first is as follows.

**There wouldn't be for you those that are distinct from the seed,
That which produces [the sprout], such as the shape, color and taste,
Potency and the ripening effects of the sprout that are distinct.**

There other flaws as well. For you [the Sa'khya] there would not be those [characteristics] that are distinct from the shape, color and so on of the seed that is producing the sprout, such as the shape, that is length and so on, of the sprout, its color such as green, yellow and so on, and its taste like sweetness, sourness and so on, as well as its potency and the ripening effects. Because [according to you] there is no distinction at all between the reality or the nature of the seed and the sprout. Given that there is this [undesired] consequence, and "because it is not the case that they are perceived as being not distinct, the realities of these two are not identical by all means," thus [154] [Candrakīrti] is throwing the reversal [of the consequence]. There is a great deal of difference between throwing a reverse [of the consequence] and throwing an autonomous reverse.

The "potency" here refers to such properties as the *gzhang grum* medicine that instantly clears the illness the moment it comes near the body and some herbal medicines the instant they are hung in the air their [healing properties] travel through the air. The "ripened effects" refer to the changes effected in the results due to differing conditions. For example, when fed milk *skyu ru ra* and *pi pi ling* and so on acquire sweetness in their taste.

ii" Refuting the responses aimed at repudiating the objections

This is as follows.

**If by clearing away its own essence that was there first
It turns into the other, how can it be itself at that point?**

If they assert that because it is by letting go of the stage of the seed and changing into a different stage, that of the sprout, the two – seed and the sprout – are merely distinct stages, so the seed itself that transforms into the sprout.

If it is through clearing away the prior stage, which is the stage of the reality of the seed, it turns into stage different from this, namely the stage of the sprout, how is it logical to assert that at that point the nature of that seed *is* the very nature of the sprout? The very entity of that stage *is* the entity of that thing and there is no entity of that thing that is other than its reality. Therefore, the [thesis that] the reality of the seed and the sprout are not distinct in any respect becomes undermined. If one thinks that although the shape and so on of the seed and sprout are distinct, their substances are not distinct so there is no contradiction, this is untenable. Because if the shapes and so on are not upheld, the substances of the seed and the sprout too cannot be upheld.

iii” Refuting by means of the consequence that during each of the two situations the grasping or non-grasping of both remains the same

This is as follows.

**If you assert here that the seed and sprout are not distinct,
Either the sprout cannot be grasped just as the seed [cannot be];
Or, since they are identical just as the sprout [can be grasped]
The seed too would be graspable, so this [self-arising] is not accepted.**

There are other faults as well. If, as per your view, between the realities of the seed and sprout there is no distinct reality in this world, just as the seed cannot be grasped at during the stage of the sprout, likewise the sprout too would become ungraspable. [155] The term “either” indicates that alternatively, since the realities of the seed and the sprout will be identical in all respects, just as the sprout can be grasped at at the stage of the sprout, the seed too would be graspable by sensory consciousness. Since this is not so, those who desire to overcome these two faults must not subscribe to this view that there is no differentiation in the realities of the seed and the sprout.

If one understands well these forms of reasoning, all misconceptions such as holding the view that while all the subjects are of distinct entities in relation to each other, their ultimate nature is one that is mutually inclusive of each other and that the ultimate reality of the prior stage *is* the ultimate reality of the latter stage, and so on.

2” Demonstrating how [arising from itself] does not exist even conventionally from the perspective of the philosophically unaffected mind

Thus having refuted self-arising, which is postulated in the system of the Sa’khya that claim to having realized the suchness – a system postulated in variance with the Buddhist tradition – that even from the perspective of the worldly convention not trained in any philosophical tenets, it is incorrect to conceive of this self-arising. This is presented in the following:

**Even though the cause is dismantled its effect can be seen;
That the two are identical is something not even the world accepts.**

Even when the cause, the seed, is dismantled its effect can be perceived, that the seed and the sprout are of identical entity is something not even the world accepts.

3” Concluding the points such refutations

This is as follows.

**So this postulation of things arising from itself
Is untenable both from the perspective of reality and the world.**

Since self-arising is contrary to reason according to both the ultimate perspective as well the worldly conventional truth, this thorough-going postulation of the outer and inner entities as originating from themselves is incorrect on the level of the ultimate truth as well as the on the level of the conventional truth. Therefore, when Noble [Nṅgrjuna] refutes self-arising, he does not qualify it in terms of ultimate or conventional [perspectives]; rather, he refutes it in general with the expression “not from itself.”²⁶² So one should think that master Bhāvaviveka’s application of the qualifier “ultimately” in [the formulation] “The things do not possess self-arising on the ultimate level because they exist; just as the senient beings” is pointless.

ii’ Refuting with the reasonings of the *Fundamental Wisdom*

**If one accepts self-arising, what is produced and that which produces,
The act and the agent too become identical; since they are not identical
One should not accept arising from itself;
For the ill consequences exposed extensively earlier will ensue.**

There are other faults as well. If one accepts the effects to arise from themselves, that which is produced – i.e. the effect – that which produces – i.e. the cause, that act that is being done and the agent that does the act too will become one. Given that they are not one self-arising is not to be subscribed to. Because there will many ill consequences exposed extensively in this treatise and the *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*. With respect to the first fault, *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

That the cause and effect are one,
This can never be tenable;
For if the cause and effect are one,
The produced and the producer become one.²⁶³

So if the cause and the effect are of identical entity, it is being stated, that the father and son or the eye and its consciousness too will become one. With respect to the second fault, *Fundamental Wisdom* states the following:

If the fuel is the fire,
The agent and the act become one.²⁶⁴

When refuted thus, one might assert “If the consequence [leveled] is ‘Are the father and his son and the agent and the act are of identical entities,’” the answer is “I accept;” and if the consequence is “Are they identical in general?” the answer is there is no entailment. Nevertheless, [the faults] cannot be abandoned because one can challenge with the reasoning that pushes the consequence “If one asserts the two to be of identical nature in the manner described earlier, their manifestations too become identical.” Therefore, one

²⁶² MMK

²⁶³ MMK

²⁶⁴ MMK

is advised, since one will be undermined by the faults stated here those who wish to undistortedly realize the two truths must not subscribe to self-arising. Given that existence and non-existence of arising from oneself are also directly contradictory mutually exclusive opposites – when one is thoroughly affirmed if the other is not eliminated the other does not exist – [157] one must accept the non-existence of arising from oneself.

b' Refuting arising from another

This has two parts:

- i' Stating the opponent's standpoint
- ii' Refutation of that system

The first is as follows. The proponents of real entities from within our [Buddhist] philosophical camp assert this. Given that arising from oneself is pointless self-arising is untenable and since this does not exist arising from both is also untenable. [Arising from] no cause is utterly deplorable and thus worthy of refutation. However, arising from another, as in the statement “how can there be from other?,” cannot be refuted. In accordance with the scriptures that teach how the four conditions that are intrinsically distinct [from the effect] are producing causes of the things, while disliking it, one will have to accept arising from another.

As for how the four conditions are to be posited, some schools assert the causal condition to be the five causes excluding *byed rgyu* as defined in the line in *Treasury of Higher Knowledge* “The ‘cause’ are the five causes.”²⁶⁵ With respect to the objective condition, they assert this to refer to all phenomena that are the objects of six consciousnesses as found in the line “Its object include all phenomena.”²⁶⁶ For immediately preceding condition, as found in the lines “The minds and the derived factors that have arisen/ Their final instance, not of same kind, is the immediately preceding,”²⁶⁷ they assert this to include all the minds and mental factors that have arisen before other than those that have entered the nirvaṇa without residue. For the governing condition, as stated in the line “What is *byed rgyu* is the governing condition,”²⁶⁸ they accept this to refer to *byed rgyu*. The six causes are, as *Treasury of Higher Knowledge* states:

byued rgyu and of simultaneous origin;
Of same kinds and endowed with like features;
Ever-present and the fruitional effect –
These are asserted to be the six causes.²⁶⁹

Some schools, based on the statement of the definition “that which cultivates it is its cause,” assert that which abides in the form of an agent, the seed that produces [the

²⁶⁵ AK
²⁶⁶ ASA
²⁶⁷ AK
²⁶⁸ AK
²⁶⁹ AK

effect], is its causal condition. Just as in the example of an old man standing up, the objects, which resemble the supporting walking cane and produces the minds and mental factors that are in the process of arising, these are the objective conditions. [158] The immediate instance of cessation is the immediately preceding condition giving rise to the effects. For example, the immediate cessation of the seed is the condition for the origination of the sprout. The auto-commentary states “This is, for example, like the immediate cessation of the seed being the immediately preceding condition of similar class of the sprout.”²⁷⁰ In the *Clear Words* too, when negating immediately preceding condition, the immediately preceding condition of similar class of the sprout is rejected. Buddhapaṇita too upholds likewise so the tradition here is to accept immediately preceding condition of similar class even to the forms as well.

That which when it is present the other originates is its governing condition. In *Clear Words* it is stated that which has arisen prior, simultaneously or subsequently too are included in these [conditions]. In auto-commentary too, except for the first, these are described in this similar manner. This is identical in meaning with the statement in *Lamp of Wisdom*, where it is translated thus “The conditions as postulated by the other schools, such as having arisen in the front, the existing and the non-existing, and so on.”²⁷¹ The translation too is better in this way. The meaning of this is explained in the *Explanation of the Commentary* as follows:

The condition that gives rise to [the effect being] in the front as postulated by Theravāda is the “objective condition,” which has arisen directly in front of the senses. The “existing condition” refer to the causal and governing conditions; while the “non-existing condition” are described as the immediately preceding condition. As for those that are in variance with respect to their names, if one examines their defining characteristics, they are subsumed into these four [conditions]. Since ÈŸvara and so on are not conditions, there is no fifth condition. This must be definitely upheld for it is stated in the *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*:

The four encompass the mind and mental factors;
The three the two types of absorptions;
The others arise from the two;
ÈŸvara and so on are not, for it’s gradual and so on.²⁷²

We accept this as explained here.²⁷³ [159]

ii’ Refutation of that system

This has two parts:

²⁷⁰ MABh

²⁷¹ She rab sgron me

²⁷² AK

²⁷³ shes rab sgron me ‘grel bshad

- 1'' Refutation of the standpoints that assert other-arising in general
- 2'' Refutation of the standpoint of the Mind Only in particular

The first has five parts:

- a'' The actual refutation of other-arising
- b'' Resolving objections from the worldly perspective to this refutation
- c'' Presenting the merits of such refutation
- d'' Demonstrating how intrinsic arising does not exist in any manner
- e'' Presenting the merits of negating intrinsic arising on the level of both of the two truths

The first has three parts:

- i'' General refutation of arising from another
- ii'' Specific refutation of arising from another
- iii Refuting arising from another by analyzing the effect with four possibilities

The first has two parts:

- 1') Refuting by means of absurd consequences
- 2') Rejecting the responses aimed at avoiding the faults

The first has two parts:

- a') The actual absurd consequence
- b') Decisive analysis of these points

This arising from another cannot be posited for it is contrary to reason and scriptures. With respect to the latter, [this thesis] contradicts many scriptural citations such as this statement in the *Rice Seedling Sutra* "The shoot of name and form too was not created by itself or by other."²⁷⁴ To state that this is contrary to reason, there is the following:

**If in dependence on the other another originates,
Then from flames will originate pitch darkness,
From anything could arise anything, this is so because
In that they are different even the non-causes are equal.**

If, in dependence upon causes that exist as different by virtue of their own essence an effect that is different by virtue of its own essence were to originate, in that case, then from a blazing flame – the dispeller – a thick darkness – that is being dispelled – can come about. Furthermore, from anything, irrespective of whether it is a cause or not, anything – both an effect and non-effect – can arise. Why is this so? This is because between the two categories, all of which that are not the engender of the effect and those that are asserted to be cause and effect, in that they are other in the sense of having their

²⁷⁴ * . *

own characteristics there are equal. Thus there are two extreme absurd consequences that relate to the reasoning accepted by the opponent. [160]

To explain these consequences, just as the rice seed that produces the rice sprout is “other” from its effect, the rice sprout, in the sense of its own characteristic, likewise those that are not producer of rice sprout, such as fire, charcoal as well as barley seed, are also other from the rice sprout in the sense of their own characteristics. This the manner in which those who propound other-arising asserts their standpoint. If these two cases of being different are accepted to be equal, then just as from rice seed, which is other, rice sprout arises, similarly from fire, charcoal and so on too rice sprout must arise as well. Also, rice sprout, which is other, arises from rice seed, [other things like] vase and cloth too must arise from rice seed as well. [It is in this way] parallel is being drawn. This is the reasoning of extreme consequence stated in the following in *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*:

That cause and effect are different
Is [a thesis that is] never tenable;
For if cause and effect are different,
Cause and non-cause will become equal.²⁷⁵

That in the case of both consequences their opposites are thrown is stated in the commentary.

b’) Decisive analysis of these points

This has two parts:

- i’) The reason why extreme consequences ensue for other-arising
- ii’) Demonstrating how there is no contradiction in accepting the opposite of the consequences

The first is as follows. Here with regard to the reason why in accepting other-arising extreme consequences ensue, some Tibetans assert that this is because cause and effect necessarily entail temporal sequence while to be other they must be simultaneous. This is utterly incorrect because all the flaws levelled [against the opponent] in refuting [other-arising] will equally apply to one’s own side as well. If one responds to this with the claim “I have no position,” then the effort of seeking that reason is pointless. [161]

Again many Tibetans assert²⁷⁶ that when the logicians establish the pervasion of a specific fire where there is a specific smoke and the pervasion of impermanence in a product, they do so in terms of invariability with respect to all places and all times. When this is being established, it is done so on the first of proving this on the basis of individual

²⁷⁵ MMK

²⁷⁶ Lobsang Tamdrim (p.94:3) identifies this as many Tibetans who are confused on the basis of interpreting Jay>nda’s critique of autonus syllogism. Garfield et al, compares this to a domino effect.

cases of a kitchen or a vase, for instance. Then, on the ground of having established the pervasion in other places and times by means of reasoning, these two pervasions are established with respect to all places and all times. If this is so, they assert, one levels [against them] the extreme consequence by means of the reasoning of [everything] being equal insofar as they are other. They claim that this type [of reductio absurdum] is like knocking over by force because of their shared identity [of difference].

This too is a talk of not having ascertained the meaning of the text and not having perceived the way of engagement of logic. [For example] by establishing a specific instance of smoke and product as being invariably [pervaded by] fire and impermanence in general without any qualification of place or time, this can eliminate well the doubt “perhaps there may be instances where although presence of fire and being impermanent are negated, the two instances that are cited as reasoning proofs are not negated.” Given that there are many instances where the two phenomena are negated to be cause and effect but they exist as mere others. So how can these examples be the equal? Therefore, this very expression “knocking over by force” reveals that theirs is an argument betraying ignorance of reasoning. That this is so I have already explained extensively elsewhere.²⁷⁷

In that case, how is this [best understood]? The *Clear Words* states:

We accept the conventional on the basis of this mere conditionality, not on the basis of accepting the four positions. This is because there will be consequence of things possessing intrinsic existence, which, in turn, is incorrect. If, however, this mere conditionality is accepted, because cause and effect are mutually contingent upon each other, they do not exist by virtue of essence. [162] Therefore, one will not be speaking of things as possessing intrinsic nature.²⁷⁸

Thus [Candrakīrti] explains the distinction between the two – that is his acceptance and non-acceptance of arising – and as its ground, he states that if one accepts arising in terms of the four positions, one will have to speak of [things] possessing intrinsic nature. Therefore, he explains clearly how if one accepts arising from another one must accept intrinsic arising and how if one accepts arising that is mere dependent origination, one does not need to accept intrinsic arising. Therefore, “other” in the context of arising from another does not refer to mere “otherness;” it is an intrinsically existing other. So to those who accept this extreme consequences are being levelled. It is definitely not the case that they are being levelled against simply accepting otherness.

This reasoning is similar to the statement that if [things] are distinct by virtue of their own characteristics they cannot belong to the same continuum. This [objection is] levelled later in the text against those who accept that although the earlier temporal sequences are distinct, they belong to the same continuum in the following:

That which are distinct by virtue of their own characteristics,

²⁷⁷ ? RG, LRC, etc.

²⁷⁸ PP

That they share the same continuum is untenable.²⁷⁹

This is so because if [two things] are other in the sense of their own characteristics, the relation of contingency [between the two] can be negated. And if they become unrelated others, then when one effect arises from its cause, it should arise from all the non-causes [as well]; and also when one cause produces its effect, it should produce all other non-effects as well. Such extreme reductio absurdum ensue.

The reason why one does not understand well this type of reasoning is the fault of not making excellent differentiations between the criteria of what is being to be negated, namely the object of negation as explained earlier, on the one hand and the presentation of dependent origination, the measure of “this” much which is being accepted. Therefore, when negating the object of negation one should recall the criteria of the objection of negation which has been explained. [163]

ii’) Demonstrating how there is no contradiction in accepting the reversal of the consequences

If one subscribes to the reversal of the two reductio consequences presented earlier, how one would interpret the following? For example, the *Clear Words* states:

As for the reversal points of the reductio consequences, they pertain only to the opponent; not to us. For we have no statements of thesis.²⁸⁰

And:

When the proponent of no intrinsic existence establishes a reductio consequence for those who propound possession of intrinsic existence, how can he come to possess the reversal point of the consequence?²⁸¹

Also:

Therefore establishment of reductio consequences is merely for the effect of refuting the opponent’s thesis, there is no [affirmation of] the reversal points of the consequences.²⁸²

This is not a problem. These statements are made in the context of refuting self-arising alone. Therefore they do not relate to all the reductio consequences levelled by the Madhyamika; they relate to the two reductio consequences refuting self-arising. The consequences there are not the absurdity of pointlessness of arising or infinite regression of arising; rather, they are the pointlessness of arising again and infinite regression of arising. The reversal of these consequences, which are the meaningfulness of arising

²⁷⁹ MA

²⁸⁰ PSP

²⁸¹ Ibid., p.

²⁸²

again and its finitude are accepted by the Sa`khyā alone. And because we do not have that thesis there is no inconsistency of having a tenet subscribing to that [view]. This is the meaning of the first citation.

Buddhapalita too speaks of “there is no point for arising again” thus mentions the comparative “again,”²⁸³ and the *Clear Words* too mentions the word “again.” Here too, it states “If one conceives of [things] arising again.”²⁸⁴ So, it is existence and arising again that are incompatible; existence and arising *per se* do not contradict each other. Similarly, it is existence and finiteness of arising again that are incompatible; existence and finiteness of arising do not contradict each other. [164]

The meaning of the second citation is this. When the Madhyamika, a proponent of no intrinsic existence, levels against the Sa`khyā the two *reductio* consequences stated earlier, he has no wish for himself to subscribe to the reversal points of the consequences. Although he has no such [wish] it is not the case that he is forced to [subscribe to the reverses] against his choice. So, it is being stated, that he [the Madhyamika] does not subscribe to the two reversal points of these two *reductio* consequences.

The meaning of the third citation is that although the reasoning proof – the meaningfulness of arising again and the finiteness of arising again – which are the predicates of the two consequences do not prove the absence of self-arising, it is not that this [reasoning] has no purpose. The point is that by establishing the pointlessness of arising and infinite regression of arising, which the Sa`khyā does not accept, this establishes the mere elimination of arising from itself, which is adhered to by the Sa`khyā.

Given that in the case of the two *reductio* consequences [of refuting arising from another, the Madhyamika] himself accepts the reversal points of the consequences, one should understand that with respect to the reversal points of *reductio* consequences there are two kinds, one where the reversal point of the consequence is accepted by ourselves and one where it is not accepted.

2') Rejecting the responses aimed at avoiding the faults

This has two parts:

- a') The response aimed at resolving the faults
- b') Refuting that response

The first is as follows.

**[Defence:] That which is capable of being produced is termed the effect;
That which is capable of producing it, even though different, is the cause.
They share the same continuum and the effect arise from its production;**

²⁸³ Buddhapalita

²⁸⁴ MA

So it's not the case that rice sprout [grow] from a barley seed and so on."

Here they state the following: The two terms, the cause and effect, possess otherness that exists by virtue of its own characteristic and yet it is not the case that anything can arise from anything. Because one perceives that the cause and effect are determined to be distinct. This is so because any thing that is capable of being created by another thing that very thing is definitely spoken of as the effect of that [another]. It is, therefore, determined to be its effect. [This term] "therefore" is a variant [reading] with respect to the commentary. A particular cause that is capable of producing [that effect], though it exists as essentially existent other, it is [still] the cause so it is determined to be its cause. Therefore, it is only the special type of other that are posited as cause and effect; it is not on the basis of mere otherness, which is the generality of otherness, we do not posit cause and effect. Furthermore, rice sprout arises from [165] a rice seed that belongs to the same continuum, it does not arise from a barley seed that does not share the same continuum. Even though they might be the same continuum, the subsequent instances, which are not its producer, do not produce the preceding instances, it is on the basis the preceding instances within the same continuum bringing into being the subsequent instances that it arises. Therefore, rice sprout does not arise from a barley seed in the manner in which the barley sprout arises from it. So it is not the case that anything arises from anything.

b') Refuting that response

We shall ask to those who propound the cause and effect to exist by virtue of their essence this question "What is the reason that makes rice seed and rice sprout to be determinately distinct?" If they answer "we can see this determination," "How is that one sees this determination?" When probed in such manner, [they respond] "Because we see that this is so we see this determination." Stating this much does not show the reason for the determination so all the flaws already mentioned before cannot be avoided, not even to the slightest degree. Thus states [Candrakīrti].²⁸⁵

This states that because [the opponent] has not demonstrated how although [cause and effect] exist by virtue of their own characteristic as different there is no contradiction in seeing their determinate [distinctness], this is not [a successful] response to repel the faults. Furthermore, to underline the point that the extremely well-known fact of how the otherness that exists by virtue of its own characteristic is not affirmed collectively across all, whether they are cause and effect or not, this itself is an damaging argument against the standpoint of the opponent, the following is stated:

[Objection:] You do not accept that a barley seed, or a seed of a Kesara, the Ki^aYuka, or any other produces a rice sprout, [you maintain that] they do not have the capability, do not share the same continuum and that They are not of the same category, likewise, the rice seed is not so for it is different.

²⁸⁵ This paragraph is a paraphrase from Candrakīrti's *Commentary on Entering the Middle Way* pp.*

Just as, that is for example, barley seed, Kesara [seed] of lotus and its pistels and so on, and the Ki^aYuka flower are different, they are not accepted as producer of rice sprout, they do not possess the capability to produce rice sprout, they do not belong to the same continuum and are not the preceding instances of the same kind. Likewise, the rice seed too does not possess the four features in relation to the rice sprout [166] for it exists by virtue of its own essence as different [from the rice sprout]. This is an argument [demonstrating how] in something that is different and unrelated [from another] one cannot even posit [the distinction of] whether it possesses the four features or not.

b” Resolving objections from the worldly perspective to this refutation

This has two parts:

i” Refuting arising from another for sequential cause and effect

ii” Refuting arising from another for simultaneous cause and effect

The first has two parts:

1’) The actual point

2’) Repudiation of objections against the refutation

The first is as follows.

**The sprout do not exist simultaneous to the seed;
Without that “other” how can there be a seed that is different?
Therefore since the arising of sprout from the seed is not established,
You should discard the position that things arise from other.**

Thus for a while [Candrakīti] engaged in eliminative argument while speaking of the essentially existing difference that is known to the opponent. This is done so on the basis that it is impossible for the cause and effect to be essentially existing different. Like Maitreya and Upagupta, while being present alone they are perceived as different on the basis of mutual dependence alone in terms of “this is from that.” The sprout does not exist simultaneous to the seed for without the transformation of the seed’s form there is no sprout. In the seed there is no essentially existing difference from the sprout, and without this how can the seed be different from the sprout? It cannot. Given that there is no essentially existing difference the arising of sprout from the seed does not exist by virtue of its essence. Therefore one should discard the position that “things arise from another.”

This [argument] demonstrates that if the seed being different from the sprout exists virtue of intrinsic nature, given that which is intrinsic existence can never cease to be, even at the time of the seed it will become a different substance from the sprout and that the two will become simultaneous in time. Since this cannot be there is no essentially existing difference in the two [that is seed and sprout]. It is not that the different entities of cause

and effect is being negated on the conventional level. It is essential to understand that [the argument] relates to the object of negation.

2') Repudiation of objections against the refutation [167]

This is as follows.

**Just as we can see that the ascent and descent
Of the two ends of the scale's balance occur together,
If they argue that the arising and ceasing of what is produced
And that which produces it occur [likewise];**

**Even if [the scale's movement] is simultaneous, there is no simultaneity
[With the seed and the sprout] so the example does not apply.**

[Objection:] The statement that the sprout does not exist simultaneous to the seed is incorrect. Just as, that is for example, between the two sides of the balance scale it is not the case that it is not simultaneous when one is in ascent the other is in descent, similarly, the acts of sequential arising and ceasing of the seed and the sprout– that which produces and that which is produced – the seed and the sprout too are temporally simultaneous. Therefore they possess difference itself and has hence no ill-consequences.

[Response:] If through the example of the balance scale the two acts of arising and ceasing of the seed and the sprout are conceived to be of simultaneous, this is inappropriate. Just because in the example of the balance scale [the ascent and the descent of] the two ends are simultaneous, if the act of becoming ascendent and descendent are one, that is simultaneous in time, even so in the case of the referent that is illustrated by that example, there is no simultaneity of time between the seed and the sprout. So this is unsuited [comparison]. To show that this is not so, the following is stated:

**If it's maintained that which is arising is ready to arise so is not present;
That which is ceasing is, though present, is ready to disintegrate;
In that case how can [the two] be similar to [the two ends of] a scale?
That [act of] arising is not suited [to be] existent as well as it has no agent.**

If that which is in the process of arising, because it is at the point of arising it is in terms of the reality of the sprout a future so it does not exist in the present. That which is in the process of ceasing is, though existing because it is accepted to be at the point of cessation, it is existent in the present. If, at the time when the sprout is at the point of arising the seed is present and the sprout is future, so how can the seed and the sprout be similar to the ascent and descent of the balance scale? They are not. Because the two ends of the balance scale are present its two acts – ascending and descending – also exist simultaneous in time. In contrast, there is simultaneity of time between the seed and the sprout.

These [arguments] demonstrate how the example of the ascent and descent of the balance scale does not apply to [the claim] that the sprout coexist in time because their two acts coexist in time. [168] It does not demonstrate how if it is possible for two acts to coexist that the two phenomena must necessarily be simultaneous as well.

The thought might occur “Although there is no simultaneity of time between the seed and sprout there is simultaneity of time between the acts of the two.” This too is untenable. These opponents did not assert difference of activities other than difference of the phenomena and here the context is to refute the intrinsic existence of the two acts. There is another fault as well. The sprout, which is the agent in relation to the act of arising, because it is a future at the time of being at the point of arising, it does not exist at that time. It is not suited to reason that although it [the sprout] does not exist at that [time of the seed], without the support, the agent that is the sprout, what is supported – which is the act of arising – exists. Therefore, since it is not simultaneous to the [act of] cessation the simultaneity of the two acts [i.e. the act of arising and ceasing] is untenable.

[Objection:] Is it not the case that in the following in the noble *Rice Seedling Sutra*,

In the manner of the ascent and descent of [the two ends of] balance scale in that very instance when the seed ceases there itself the sprout arises.”²⁸⁶

this example of the ascent and descent of a balance scale is cited. Therefore, it is incorrect to refute the view that accepts the seed and sprout as resembling the ascent and descent of a balance scale.

[Response:] “It is true that [this example] has been cited. However, this is not to demonstrate arising from another nor is it to demonstrate arising by virtue of one’s own characteristic.”²⁸⁷ Since [Candrakīrti] states thus the arising that is negated in the context of the expression “If this arising ...” is the negation of arising by means of one’s essence, it is never the case that the arising of sprout from its seed is being refuted.

If in that sutra the simultaneity of the seed and sprout are not being shown in the manner of the ascent and descent of a balance scale, what kind of simultaneity is that example intended for? In the commentary it is stated that this [example] is taught to elucidate as illusion-like those that are established unexamined, that which originate through dependence simultaneously. [169] “Those that originate through dependence simultaneously” must refer to simultaneous presence of the two acts and given that in that sutra the example of the ascent and descent of a balance scale illustrates a simultaneity [of two things], this cannot be explained in terms of the simultaneity of seed and sprout. So the oneness of two acts being refuted is the two acts that exist by virtue of one’s own characteristics, it is not the case that the simultaneous existence of the two acts in general is being negated [here]. Therefore as long as one accepts arising the ceasing of the cause and the effect being at the point of arising must be simultaneous in time.

²⁸⁶ * . *

²⁸⁷ MABh

Although this is not untenable for mere arising or acceptance of arising on the conventional level, this is inconsistent for subscribing to ultimate arising or arising by virtue of one's own characteristic. This is so because in the first case although the acts of arising and cessation of cause and effect are simultaneous, it is not necessary for the cause and effect to coexist in time. [In contrast] in the latter case if the acts are simultaneous, the cause and effect must also coexist in time. The act of the arising of the effect must depend upon the agent, the sprout and so on in the sense of "this arises," so they are the support and the supported. And if the support and the supported exist on the ultimate level it is incorrect for them to possess different natures, so at all times the act must possess its support. Therefore even at the time when the sprout and so on are at the point of arising, as the support for the act of arising, the sprout must be present. Thus the cause and effect will become simultaneous in time. Because damages ensue, this is untenable. In contrast, for arising on the conventional level, if [two things] become the support and the supported it is not necessary for them to remain so throughout all times. So they are no equal.

The act of sprout's arising that is simultaneous to the seed is the act of the sprout being at the point of arising. This [act] and the sprout are the support and the supported in general and even though at the time of this act the sprout is not present, it is not contradictory for the act to be present. [170] This is like the following example. Although in general if the object of relation is negated that which relates [too] must cease, it is not contradictory for the seed to be the object of relation and the sprout is that which relates yet at the time of the sprout although the seed has ceased the sprout has not ceased. If one knows how to posit the flawless position of the Middle Way on the basis of excellent understanding of how it is through reasoning such as these the opponents are refuted and how these arguments do not revert to ourselves, one is then [a true] Madhyamika. However, when refuting one presents only erroneous [arguments] and when they are turned back to oneself, one seeks haven in defiance. Towards these, we should treat in the manner in which the *Clear Words* suggest when it states "I shall not argue with those who defy [direct evidence of the senses]." ²⁸⁸

ii" Refuting arising from another for simultaneous cause and effect

This is as follows.

**If for eye consciousness there are its causes that are simultaneous
Such as the eyes as well as the discriminations that are concurrent,
If such "other" [factors] do exist, then it originates from existing [things]
So what point is there [for its arising]? If, it's asserted, that it is not present,
the flaws for have already been explained.**

[Objection:] Here they assert that because there is no simultaneity of time between seed and sprout they possess no essentially existing difference if arising from another is untenable for them, in cases where there are simultaneous cause and effect such difference does exist so there is arising from another. For example, there is the eye

²⁸⁸ PSP

consciousness and other factors that are simultaneous to it, such as feeling and so on. Just as the eye, the form and so on, as well as the feeling and so on that originate simultaneously together produce at the same time the eye consciousness. Likewise, the eyes and so on as well as the mind are always conditions of feeling and so on that are simultaneous. So assert some opponents.

[Response:] If with regard to eye awareness, that is the eye consciousness, its producer that are simultaneous, such as the eyes and so on, and those that originate together such as recognitions and so on are conceived to be its conditions, at that point in relation to recognitions and so on [the eye consciousness] exists as different, what need is there for something that is present at the time of the cause to originate once again? There is not the slightest need so it has no arising. If, desiring to avoid the fault of non-arising, one asserts that the effect does not exist at the time of the cause, in that case for this sequential [cause and effect] the ill-consequences [pointing out] that there is no essentially existing difference have already been mentioned before. [171]

Therefore this argument, by demonstrating how those that are asserted to be cause and effect although difference *per se* exists, it indicates how arising by virtue of intrinsic nature is impossible and therefore arising from another is impossible [as well]. The preceding argument demonstrates how although arising is possible for cause and effects difference by virtue of intrinsic nature is impossible and therefore arising from another is impossible. Therefore, the statement “arising from another exists” comes to be devoid of content and only the sound that propound this remains left behind.

iii Refuting arising from another by analyzing the effect with four possibilities

This is as follows.

**If the producer that produces an effect that is different is the cause,
I'll ask “Does it produce something that is existent, non-existent,
Both or neither?” If it is existent what need is there for a producer?
If it's non-existent too what can that cause do for it?
What can it do for that is both or to that which is neither?**

If a producer that which produces a product that is different from itself is the cause, we shall examine by asking “Does that cause produce an effect that exists intrinsically, or does not exist, that both exists and does not exist, or something that is free of both existence and non-existence?” Here, if for the time being, the effect exists intrinsically what need is there for it to have a condition that is its producer? This is unnecessary. Because if something that possesses intrinsic existence arises, then what has already arisen will arise once again. That this is untenable has already been demonstrated. For an effect that is non-existent too what can the condition do? Like the horn of a rabbit it does not exist. For the combination of both existence and non-existence what can the condition do? Such combination of the two is impossible. For that which is devoid of both existence and non-existence too what can the condition do? That which is neither of the two is impossible.

The Sixth Ground III Presentation of the Two Truths

b” Resolving objections from the worldly perspective to this refutation

This has two parts:

i” Resolving objections from the worldly perspective on the basis of the world’s acceptance of arising from another

ii” Resolving objections because even from the perspective of worldly convention arising from another does not exist

The first has two parts:

1’) The objection that [such refutation] is injured by the worldly convention

2’) Presenting the responses that such [perspective] does not harm

[Objection:] If all the arguments that have been put forth to affirm arising from another [172] have been burned without residue by the fire of your intelligence just like dry firewood with melted butter poured over it, it is adequate to have the firewood stirred on by the blazing fire of your wisdom. It is not necessary stir [this fuel] any more.

If asked, “Isn’t it the case that without presenting the arguments the objectives of those who accept arising from another cannot be established?” This is not so. Because whatever is established by the world there is nothing any other argument can do. The seeing of the world possesses extremely great power. That this is so is explained in the following:

**The worldly claim their perspective to be true by abiding in their views;
Why is [other arising] being proclaimed here by a proponent of reason?
That different things originate from different things is realized by the world;
So what need is there for reason [to affirm] that arising from another exists?**

Given that the all the worldly [people], while abiding in their views alone, assert the worldly perspective to be valid this possesses extremely great power and that from a cause that exists as essentially different an effect that is different originates is directly cognized by the worldly people. [Furthermore] when the proof of reason is presented, of the two instances – that which is evident and which is not evident – it is for the second [such reasoning] is presented. As for the first, since it is established by direct valid cognition no proof of reasoning is employed for this. Therefore in the case of the existence of arising from another, what point is there for presenting other reasoning arguments? There is none; for it is established by direct perception.

2’) Presenting the responses that such [perspective] does not harm

Those who have failed to understand the meaning of the scriptures without distortion, those who are bereft of the means – the repeated hearing of the way of no-intrinsic existence – that help separate one from the long acquainted friend, namely the manifest clinging to true existence of things that derive from the maturation of the imprinted propensities of grasping at true existence since beginningless cycle of existence, [173] those who rely upon the worldly convention – the arbitrary terms – as a means to object, this cannot be countered without explaining many aspects of the origination of the worldly perspective. Therefore it is necessary to show [to these] what are the distinctive features of that object which can be harmed and what are the distinctive features of the object which cannot be harmed in the sense [of drawing the distinction] “This kind of domain will be controverted by the worldly perspective” and “This kind of domain will not be controverted by the worldly perspective.” For this, it is necessary to precede first by presenting the differentiation of the two truths. This has five parts:

- i’) Presentation of the two truths
- ii’) Relating this to the actual context
- iii’) Explaining the realities of the individual truths
- iv’) Presenting the objections [that demonstrate] how worldly perspectives contradict what is negated
- v’) Presenting the manner in which worldly perspectives can harm

The first has four parts:

- (1’) Presenting how, through the differentiation between the two truths, that the phenomena have two, two realities
- (2’) Another presentation of the two truths
- (3’) Explaining the divisions within the conventional truth from the perspective of the worldly
- (4’) Showing how the object of apprehension of [the mind] mistaken with respect to its object of apprehension does not exist even on the conventional level

The first is as follows.

**All entities, because of the seeings of perfect truth and falsehood,
All entities, each of them uphold two, two realities.
The object that is seen by the perfect vision is the suchness,
While those seen by the false vision are taught to be conventional truth.**

The Blessed Ones who realize the individual realities of the two truths without distortion have shown that all entities – the inner like the motivational factors and intention and the outer like the sprouts – to uphold as two aspects of their realities. What are these [two]? It is their conventional reality and their ultimate reality. This indicates that when differentiated, even in the case of a single entity such as a sprout, there are two realities – one that is conventional and another that is ultimate. It is definitely not the case that this demonstrates how a single entity such as the sprout, for example, in itself is [both] the two truths in relation to the ordinary person and the Noble One.

Understood thus, since it is impossible for there to be a phenomenon without its reality, [174] insofar as it is an established basis, it does not transcend the bounds of being being either of identical entity or different entity. Although one accepts the existence of reality (*ngo bo*) that there is no intrinsically existing reality is not a contradiction. Here, the ultimate reality of things, such as sprout, is its own entity found as the object of a specific gnosis of those who directly perceive the perfect truth; it is not established by virtue of its own entity, however. This is one of the two realities mentioned [earlier]. “Specific gnosis” indicates that it is not found by any gnosis of the Noble Ones; rather it is identified as a specific or a particular gnosis. That is to say it is found by the gnosis that realizes reality as it is. When it is presented as being found or established by that gnosis one might think that if there is something to be established by that [gnosis] this must be truly existent. To help prevent this, [Candrakīrti] states “it is not established by virtue of its own entity, however.” Therefore those who assert that if the meditative equipoise of the Noble Ones realizes the ultimate truth it becomes truly existent so in the system of this master [Candrakīrti] the ultimate truth is not an object of knowledge, they have not understood at all the significance of what is stated in this system of how although something is found by the meditative equipoise [of the Noble Ones] it does not truly exist and in so doing they have undermined the system of the learned ones.

The conventional reality, which is other than the ultimate, is one’s own entity that is found through the force of seeing falsehood by the ordinary being whose eyes of intelligence is totally covered by the cataract of ignorance. This reality perceived within the sphere of the vision of the childish [ignorant ones] as existing by virtue of one’s characteristic does not exist as perceived. This is one of the two realities.

With regard to “finding the ultimate reality” the statement that the one who finds this is the Noble One is meant in the sense of primarily. It is not that [Candrakīrti] does not accept the ordinary person who possesses the Middle Way view within his mind does not find it. [175] With regard to finding the conventional reality too, the statement that it is found by common ordinary person too is intended primarily for the fact that the [individual] instances of conventional reality, such as the outer and inner entities, are seen through the power of ignorance. It is not the case that [Candrakīrti] does not accept that the conventional valid cognitions within the mind of the Noble Ones do not find these entities.

Although the finding of individual instances of conventional truth, such as vase and so on, can occur even for those who have not obtained the Middle Way view, to ascertain that basis as a conventional truth, however, it is definitely necessary for one to have first obtained the Middle Way view. Because if that basis is established as a conventional truth, it must be established as false and to establish that as false explicitly, first one must negate by means of valid cognition that basis as being truly existent. Therefore, as the expression “through the force of seeing falsehood” [indicates] although these common people perceive falsehood, it is not necessary for them to establish these as false. This is analogous to, for example, when spectators at a magical show see magical horses and elephants, although they perceive falsehood, it is not necessary to establish these

appearances as false. Therefore the definition of the conventional truth, which is “that which is found through false vision” is this: “It is the referent found by a conventional valid cognition that realizes a false object of knowledge that is a deceptive fact.”

Of those two natures or realities mentioned earlier, that which is the object found by **rational cognition** (*rigs shes*) realizing or seeing the perfect truth is the suchness, that is it is the ultimate truth. This will be explained [later] in the section pertaining to the lines “Through the might of the cataract ...”²⁸⁹ That which is found by conventional valid cognition that perceives false objects of knowledge has been taught by the Teacher [Buddha] to be the conventional truth. The two bases upon which the ultimate and conventional truths are being found are explained as distinct; it is not the case that one [reality] is found in two different modes. [176]

(2') Another presentation of the two truths

With respect to the basis of division for the two truths, although there are many different views, here we take the object of knowledge as [the basis of division]. *Sutra of Father and Son's Meeting*, as cited in *Compendium of Trainings*, states:

Thus the Tatḡatha comprehends the conventional and the ultimate truths. What is to be known too is confined to this conventional and the ultimate truth alone. These, in turn, the Blessed One has clearly perceived to be emptiness, clearly knew, and have excellently actualized. Therefore, he is referred to as the omniscient.²⁹⁰

The expression “What is to be known too” [indicates] that the object of knowledge is the basis of division, “confined to this” [indicates] that division into the two truths is exhaustive and because the Tatḡatha has comprehended both truths he is shown to be an omniscient. Therefore those who explain the ultimate truth as being not an object of knowledge and that is not cognized by any awareness as the intention of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* is a distorted interpretation.²⁹¹

The differentiation into the twofold truth of conventional and the ultimate are the actual divisions. On the question of what is the meaning of this division too, there are many different [opinions]. Here, however, I shall explain this in the following. Both [these two truths] have realities and it is impossible for there to be a reality that is either not identical or different. If the subjects are different in terms of their reality from the emptiness of true existence they will become truly existent. They are identical in terms of their reality and distinct in terms of their distinguishers just like being produced and impermanence. [For example] *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* states:

Independent of the conventional
No suchness can be found.

²⁸⁹ MA Tsongkhapa's treatment of these lines can be found in pp.*

²⁹⁰ SS

²⁹¹ Ngoklo, Chapa, etc. See his BCA *bsdus don*

The conventional is taught to be emptiness;
The emptiness itself is the conventional;
One does not occur without the other,
Just as [being] produced and impermanent.²⁹²

The meaning of the first four lines [of this citation] is this: There is no suchness that is different in terms of reality from the conventional [177] because the conventional truths are empty of true existence and the emptiness of true existence itself is posited on the conventional as its basis. Then two lines indicate that this is so and that they observe a relationship whereby one does not occur without the other. This, in turn, is a relationship of identical entity so like being produced and impermanence they are shown to be of identical reality. As for the identification of the individual members of this division, this is similar to the individual definitions [of the truths] – that is as found by the two types of valid cognition – explained earlier.²⁹³

If [what is presented] here is interpreted in harmony with *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, how would one explain the following in that text?

The conventional and the ultimate –
These are accepted to be the two truths.
The ultimate is not the purview of cognition;
The cognition is asserted to be conventional.²⁹⁴

Here, the first two lines present division into the two truths and, when identifying the reality of the individual members of the division, the identification of the ultimate truth is presented in one line “The ultimate truth ..” while the identification of the conventional truth is presented in one line “The cognition is ... conventional.” To maintain that the thesis of the ultimate truth being not an object of knowledge as presented in the preceding line is established by the subsequent line does not seem to be the meaning of the text at all. Therefore this identification of the two truths is a [re]statement in *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* of the meaning of the following citation from *Sutra of Father and Son's Meeting* as quoted in *Compendium of Trainings*:

The conventional is seen by the Tatvāgatha as the purview of the world. That which is the ultimate is inexpressible, it is not an object of knowledge, it is not an object of detailed knowledge, it is not an object of thorough knowledge, it is not shown.²⁹⁵

...

Here, the meaning of the statement that the ultimate truth is not an object of knowledge is [to be understood] in the sense of it being not an object of cognition as will be explained later in the section when the [178] meaning of the sutra cited from *Entering the Two*

²⁹² Semdrel, verse 68.

²⁹³ Refer to the section in Elucidation.

²⁹⁴ BCA, 9.*

²⁹⁵ SS

Truths is explained.²⁹⁶ Not positing thus if [the ultimate truth] is not an object of any cognition this contradicts the statement that the Conqueror, because the conventional and the ultimate – all facts that are in the aspect of emptiness – have become manifest, he is posited to be an omniscient. Later on too this point will be explained many times.

The identification of the ultimate truth [as found in *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*] is not that it is cognition alone that is posited [to be the conventional]. Rather it is the object cognition [that is the conventional]. This too in turn is, as it is described as “the purview of the world,” the fact found as the field of experience or the purview of the worldly, that is conventional, consciousness that realizes falsehood. This is how one should take the meaning of the object of cognition as being conventional truth.

The division of the object of knowledge into the two truths is to indicate that the object of knowledge is exhausted within this [twofold] division. In this regard, as for scriptural citations, there is the *Father and Son's Meeting* sutra that has been quoted earlier and this is stated explicitly in the *Sutra Definitely Presenting the Suchness* in the following:

There is the conventional and likewise the ultimate truth;
There is never at any time a third truth.²⁹⁷

The auto-commentary too states:

Likewise, whatever other minor truths there are these too one should ascertain only as belonging appropriately to either of the two truths.²⁹⁸

Thus it explains how many enumerations of truth mentioned in the *Ten Levels Sutra* are encompassed within the two truths. Given that the truths realized on the basis of further divisions mentioned there are explained in terms of the presentations of the aggregates, elements and sources, this master [Candrakīrti] too accepts the twofold division of the truth to be exhaustive.

The reasoning [to establish the exhaustive nature of this twofold division] is this. When one basis is **affirmed** (*yongs su gcod pa*) as false and a deceptive fact, that it is a non-deceptive fact must be **implicitly eliminated** (*rnam par gcod pa*). This is because deceptive and non-deceptive are direct opposites that abide with mutual exclusion. [179] If they are so this pervade all objects of knowledge excluding the third possibility that is both or neither of the two. *Light of the Middle Way* states:

Those phenomena that is characterized by abiding as mutual exclusions is such that when one is negated if the other is not established the latter does not exist. [In this case] it is untenable also to conceive of something that is neither of the two.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ Give cross reference to the later section of the text.

²⁹⁷ * . *

²⁹⁸ MABh

²⁹⁹ *Madhyamakāloka*, *

Also:

Those two [terms] of which when one is affirmed explicitly the other is not negated implicitly this latter does not exist, these two [terms] are characterized by abiding in mutual exclusion. That which are characterized by abiding in mutual exclusion they pervade entirely throughout all [phenomena]. That which pervade entirely throughout all eliminates other bodies of possibility. For example, an embodied being and not embodied being.³⁰⁰

This is as stated here. This should be understood with relation to all other instances of direct opposites.

If an instance of direct opposite that eliminates the third possibility cannot be demonstrated, there is no way to undertake refutation on the basis of enquiring “does it exist or not” “is it one or many” and so on reducing [the choices] into binary categories. If, however, there is [such an instance] within that direct opposites when one of the terms is negated if the other is not affirmed this latter does not exist. Therefore those who claim that [in the system of] the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka there are no direct opposites are seasoned in the systems of refuting [other’s positions] and positing [of one’s own positions]. Insofar as when one of the term in direct opposites is eliminated the other is affirmed, and when one is negated the other is established, there is no difference between the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka and Svatantrika-Madhyamaka.

iii’) Explaining the realities of the individual truths

Within the conventional there are the objects and subjects; of these two, from the perspectives of the world even within the subject there are those that are correct and those that are distorted. This is presented in the following: [180]

**The seeing of falsehood too is accepted to be two kinds:
That of the clear senses and that of impaired senses.
The cognitions of those with impaired senses
Are, in contrast to the unimpaired senses, accepted to be distorted.**

Not only is the object of knowledge divided into two truths, even within the subjects that perceive falsehood there are two – correct and distorted – that are accepted. They are the clear senses untainted by immediate conditions of illusion and consciousnesses based upon them [on the one hand] and the impaired senses, which are the subjects tainted by immediate conditions of illusion. Of these the consciousnesses tainted by impaired senses are, in contrast to the unimpaired senses – that is the consciousness untainted by immediate conditions of illusion – asserted to be distorted. The former is asserted to apprehend the objects without distortion. These two distinctions are not the position of the Middle Way; they are from the point of view of the perspectives of the world. Just as

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p.*

the subject is differentiated in terms of distorted and undistorted, this true also of the object as well. This is presented in the following:

**Those that are held by six unimpaired senses
Which are realized by the worldly [perspectives],
These are true from for the world, as for the rest,
Even from for the world they are posited as distorted.**

Those facts that are cognized by the world and are the objects held by the six senses which are free of the harms of immediate conditions of illusion, these are true or correct within the framework of the world alone. It is not the case that these objects are being posited as true or correct from the perspective of the Noble Ones. The meaning of “Noble Ones” and “the Middle Way position” here share the same meaning. As for the rest, which include mirror images and so on, which are perceived when the senses are harmed, these are posited as being distorted within the framework of the world itself. The term “itself” indicates that in order posit these cognitions to be deluded, the conventional valid cognitions alone is adequate. This does not depend upon rational cognitions.

Here, the conditons that adversely affect the senses that are internal are the cataract, yellowish vision, eating *dadura* fruit and so on. “Dadura” refers to *thang phrom*, which when its fruit is consumed everything appears as gold. [181] “So on” include epidemic of disease and others. The conditions that adversely affect the senses that are external are mirrors, speaking aloud inside a cave and so on, the proximity of the spring sun to whitish sand and so on. These conditions that adversely affect the senses, although do not exist internally, respectively the become the cause for apprehending mirror reflections, echoes, and grasping at mirage as water. Similarly, one should understand the mantras and the medicinal substances prepared by a magician and so on.

Those that adversely affect mental consciousness are the mantras, the medicinal substances as well as distorted philosophies, false proofs and being adversely affected by sleep and so on. Since sleep is explained as agent that adversely affect the mental faculty out of the six senses, those who claim that this master [Candrakīrti] accepts the presence of sensory perceptions in sleep represents a great distortion. In that this is so, the adverse affects of being tainted by the ignorance of two self graspings ingrained in us since beginningless time, these are not held in this context to be the causes that adversely affect [the cognitions]. It is the immediate conditions of illusion that adversely affect the senses that are held recognized here [to the causes]. That the conventional facts apprehended by six consciousnesses that are free of such adverse affects and those that are contrary to them are posited to be correct and distorted is from the point of view of the perspectives of the world alone. This is because within this there are [distinctions of] being injured and not injured by the wordly perspective with regard to whether it exists just as perceived. From the point of view of the Noble Ones, there is no [distinction] of correct and distorted [facts within the conventional truth]. Just as the reflections [in a mirror] and so on do not exist in reality as they are perceived, perception of blue and so on as existing by virtue of their own characteristics by those who possess ignorance, this [182] too does not exist as being perceived. Therefore, even with respect to being erroneous, there is no difference between these two cognitions.

[Question:] The perception of false objects due to having immediate conditions of impairment of physical sense organs, as mental consciousness has adversely affecting conditions such as dream the perception of a human being in a dream and apprehending it as a human and so on, and perception of magical horses and elephants as horses and as elephants in a waking state, it is true that these are distorted is something even the everyday worldly cognition can realize. However, the facts apprehended by the mind adversely affected by inferior philosophies cannot be cognized as distorted by everyday worldly cognition. So how can these be posited as distorted from the perspective of the world alone?

[Reply:] The adverse affect being analyzed here in the context of whether or not there is an adverse affect is not taken to be the adverse affect of grasping through innate [ignorance]. The postulations of inferior philosophies refer to primal substance and so on which are falsely imputed only through one's mind being impacted by inferior philosophy. Although these cannot be cognized as distorted by everyday worldly cognition, given that they are cognized as distorted by valid conventional cognitions this constitutes being cognized as false by worldly cognition. Those contents such as those apprehended by the two self-grasplings are what are referred to as "objects of unimpaired senses." Although they are, from the perspective of everyday worldly understanding, correct or true, they do not exist even on the conventional level.

One might ask "Because one does not accept correct conventional truth although one does not distinguish between correct and distorted [conventional truth], why would one not posit the objects and the subjects tainted by ignorance as "distorted conventional truth"? [183]

[Reply:] Since conventional truth is posited through valid conventional cognition, if one were to posit distorted conventional truth one will have to it through such [conventional cognition]. However, valid conventional cognitions cannot establish [consciousness] tainted by the propensities of ignorance as erroneous.

(4') Showing how the object of apprehension of [the mind] mistaken with respect to its object of apprehension does not exist even on the conventional level
Now to relate what has been explained in general, that is how adverse affects on the mind cause error with regard to the object of apprehension, to a specific instance by means of analogies, the following is stated:

**Upholders of extreme affected by sloth of unknowing,
Those "truths" postulated by them as per their views
And those constructed as illusion, mirage and so on,
These do not exist even from the standpoint of the world.**

The upholders of extreme views whose minds are affected by the sloth of unknowing who have adverse affects of inferior philosophy and false reasoning, as they aspire to engage with suchness, they do not uphold without distortion [notions of] arising or

disintegration known to unphilosophical, such as the cowherders, [unlearned] women and so on. As they desire to excel the [everyday] worldly people, just like a tree climber who lets go of the lower branches before holding onto the next, they fall into the abyss of grave inferior views. As they become deprived of the perfect sight of the two truths they will not obtain the resultant liberation. Therefore the postulations of these upholders of extreme views, the “truths” as found in their texts such as the three qualities [according to Sa’khya], these do not exist even on the level of worldly conventional truth. This [point] negates perfectly the assertion that according this tradition existence from the perspective of an erroneous cognition is defined as existence on the conventional level.

Similarly, all such imputations as illusion, mirage, mirror reflections and so on, as horses, as elephants, as [real] faces, these too are not existent from the standpoint of worldly conventional truth. Therefore, in order [something] to be conventionally existent, it must be something that is established by valid cognition. [184] Although these objects of apprehension do not exist even on the conventional level, it is not accepted that this is true [also] of the appearing objects.

The perception of the five sense objects, such as form, sound and so on, to the sensory consciousness are existing by virtue of their own characteristics is [due to] the contamination of ignorance. Therefore, such cognitions and the sensory experiences that perceive mirror reflections, echoes and so on, other than their difference of subtlety, insofar as they are [both] erroneous with respect to their appearing objects, there is no difference. Although the existence of blue and so on by virtue of their own characteristics and mirror reflection as face are impossible, just as mirror reflections that is not face exists, in the same manner, although they do not exist by virtue of their own characteristics blue and so on must exist. Here just as [blue and so on] exist as external objects, mirror reflection too is accepted as a form source. Later in the text, it is stated that mirror reflection produces sensory cognitions as well. This mode of understanding should be extended also to the illusions where the eyes see horses and elephants and echoes. This is a unique presentation of this excellent tradition [of Candrakīrti].

ii’) Relating this to the actual context

This is as follows.

**Perceived by eyes that are covered with cataracts,
Just as they cannot see like the eyes free of cataracts,
Likewise the cognition deprived of stainless gnosis
Cannot cause harm to cognition that is stainless.**

Given that suchness, the true meaning, is not posited through conventional cognition, the refutation of arising from another is not undertaken by remaining only within the views of the worldly [perspective]. It is done so on the basis of accepting the vision of the Noble Ones and is refuted on the ultimate level. Since this refutation of arising from another is done so with the qualifier “ultimate,” just as the vision of eyes affected with cataracts perceive falling of hairs and so on cannot undermine the absence of perception

of falling hair by vision not affected by cataract, likewise, [the mind of] the ordinary person tainted by ignorance, which has abandoned – that is bereft of – the stainless or uncontaminated gnosis cannot undermine the cognition devoid of the stain or contamination of ignorance’s pollution. [185] This negation of arising from another on the ultimate level is not undermined even if one were to allow the establishment of arising from another from the worldly perspective. Therefore the opponent [who accepts arising from another] is appropriate to be an object of laughter for the sublime learned ones.

iii’) Explaining the realities of the individual truths

This has two parts:

- 1” Explaining the conventional truth
- 2” Explaining the ultimate truth

The first has three parts:

- a” From whose perspective is the conventional true or untrue
- b” How the mere conventional appears or does not appear to the three individuals
- c” How from the perspectives of ordinary being and Noble Ones [a truth] becomes ultimate and conventional

The first has two parts:

- i” The actual points
- ii” Explaining unique presentation of the afflictions

The first is as follows.

**Because delusion obscures the nature it is “conventional;”
That which is fabricated by it that appears as true,
This is described by the Sage as “conventional truth.”
The fabricated entities [exist] on the conventional level.**

Because this [ignorance] obscures the sentient beings from viewing the things as they really are it is called “delusion.” This ignorance that exaggerates the reality of things as possessing intrinsic existence when it does not exist intrinsically, this [ignorance] which has the nature of obscuring the vision of the mode of being, this is the “concealer.” This identifies the “conventional,” the perspective from which the truth of the conventional truth is being defined. This is not an identification of the conventional [truth] in general. This identification [captures] the meaning of the following [stanza] from *Descent to Lañka Sutra*, where the mind that mistakes what is devoid of ultimate intrinsic existence as possessing such existence as the conventional:

The arising of things is on the conventional;

On the ultimate there is no intrinsic nature;
That which is deluded towards no intrinsic nature,
That is accepted as concealer of the final truth.³⁰¹

As the Sanskrit term for conventional [*saṃvṛti*] also connotes “concealer,” here the “conventional” is a concealer. What does it conceal? As it states “concealer of final truth,” it conceals the meaning of the final truth. Hence, it is asserted to be a “conventional” or a “concealer.” This does not indicate that it is a correct conventional within the distinction of correct and distorted conventional truths.

The “conventional” presented in the first line and the conventional presented in the last two lines should not be taken as being the same. The first refers to the “conventional” the level on which one accepts the things to possess arising and so on; while the latter refers to conventional in the sense of grasping at true existence, the perspective from which all things are held to be true.

Through the force of that “conventional” of grasping at true existence blue and so on appear as contrived – that is while they do not exist intrinsically they appear to be so – to the sentient beings who perceive them as true, because they are true from the perspective of that distorted convention of the world, the Sage described them as “worldly conventional truth.” Those entities that are fabricated by conceptualization which is untrue from the perspectives of any of the three individuals, since they are untrue from their conventions, they are referred to as “mere conventional.”

[In this context the commentary states the following:]

Some small [instances of] dependently originated, such as mirror reflections and echoes and so on are, though false they appear to those who possess ignorance. Some small [instances of] forms such as blue [color], the mind, feelings and so on, are perceived as true. However, as for the nature of the mode of being all phenomena, this is never perceived by those who possess ignorance. Therefore, this nature and that which is false even on the conventional level, these are not conventional truth.³⁰²

To explain the meaning of this citation, the expression “some small [instances of]” is translated as “some” in Naktsō’s translation, which is better. “Though mirror reflections and so on are false they appear” refer to their perceptions as false. This is falsehood in the sense of the convergence of appearing as face but being devoid of face. [187] So this emptiness of true existence refers to being empty of being face as it appears; it does not have the meaning of the emptiness of true existence of reflection [itself] in the sense of its existence by virtue of its own characteristic. Therefore, even though mirror reflection is established as being devoid of being the face, there is no contradiction at all in it being true from the perspective of the “conventional” that grasps at it as existing by virtue of its own characteristic. So it is a conventional truth.

³⁰¹ * . *

³⁰² MABh

The statement of mirror reflection being not a “conventional truth” [here] is intended to be this. For example, from the perspective of the worldly conventions of who is learned in language, examples like mirror reflection is false as being a real face. So in relation to this these [examples like mirror reflections] are not “conventional truths.” How can it be that they are accepted as conventional truth as stated in the line “While those seen by the false vision are taught to be conventional truth?”³⁰³ If this is not the case and it is contradictory for something to be a conventional truth if it is not a true existence on the conventional level, this will violate many of the presentations, such as the statement that existence by virtue of one’s own characteristic does not exist even on the nominal level, how negation of true existence and affirmation of absence of true existence are all undertaken on the nominal level, and so on. Therefore who who claim that those facts, such as mirror reflections, which are recognized as erroneous even by everyday worldly cognitions, are not conventional truths but are mere conventional seem to have failed to acquire understanding of the exhaustive nature of the twofold division of truth, [how to distinguish between] truth and falsity from the perspective of the world and the truth and falsity as understood by the Madhyamika.

The statement “As for the nature of the mode of being all phenomena, this is never perceived by those who possess ignorance,” is understood in terms of consciousness that are tainted by ignorance since it is maintained that the Noble Ones who have abandoned ignorance realize suchness in a direct manner. [188] Although the gnosis of the states subsequent to meditative equipoise of the Noble Ones on the learner’s stage and the views of suchness of ordinary beings are tainted by ignorance and its propensities so [this nature] does not appear to them directly, one will have to accept that the ultimate truth does appear to them in general. “Therefore, for the time being, it is on the basis of afflicted ignorance, which belongs to the branches of cyclic existence, the conventional truth is defined.”³⁰⁴ As stated here, the ignorance that grasps at phenomena as true existence known as grasping at self-existence of person and phenomena is maintained [here] to be the ignorance within the twelve links [of dependent origination]. It is therefore not accepted as obscuration to knowledge.

The statement that it is on the basis of that ignorance grasping at true existence that the conventional truth is defined explains the manner in which how the conventional truths are defined in relation to a specific perspective. It does not suggest that conventional truths like vase, cloth, and so on are posited by this [mind] grasping at true existence. Because what is posited by such grasping at true existence is something one does not accept even on the nominal level. Because the “conventional” that is part of the expression “conventional truth,” which is the perspective within which [things] are posited as true and the “conventional” within the context of positing vase and so on as “conventionally existent” share the same term, it appears that there have been numerous instances where people have conflated their meanings as being the same as well. So one should differentiate [these meanings] well.

³⁰³ MA, 6:* Refer Tsongkhapa’s own commentary of this line earlier.

³⁰⁴ MABh

[Question:] In that case, are these phenomena, such as vase, true for the “convention” of all beings who have not become fully enlightened? Or are these some that are not true for the convention of some individuals?

[Reply:] Even these [phenomena such as] form, sound and so on which are posited as conventional truths are, “for the Disciples, self-enlightened ones and bodhisattvas who have abandoned afflicted ignorance, who perceives the conditioned world as resembling mirror reflections, for them they share the nature of being contrived. They are not true for they have no manifest pretension of true existence.”³⁰⁵ To explain the meaning of this statement, [189] there are three individuals for whom [things] are [said to be] not true. It is not just any disciple, self-enlightened one or bodhisattva, specific features are mentioned. One specific feature is the direct realization of all conditioned things as though devoid intrinsic existence they appear as such. This much can be found among bodhisattvas below the seventh level and among disciple and self-enlightened Noble Ones who are on the learner’s stage. Therefore to exclude them the three individuals are described as having abandoned ignorance. So one recognizes these to be the bodhisattva’s on the purified levels and the disciple and self-enlightened foe-destroyers – that is it for [these three things are] untrue

That which are untrue refer to, as “Even these” indicates, the outer and inner phenomena. The reason for their being untrue is because there is no pretension or clinging to true existence because the ignorance grasping at true existence has ceased. Therefore [these citations] establish how the outer and inner phenomena are untrue for the “convention” of these three individuals. So when the commentary establishes nowhere that these [phenomena] are not conventional truths for these individuals, rather it establishes that they are untrue, those who take this as proving [these phenomena] as not conventional truth, the way of engagement of their mind is crude. Therefore, this an inferior position that interprets the intention of the master [Candrakīrti] through pollution of the stain of one’s own mind.

That it is being established thus is not to the three individuals [for their benefit]. Rather it is being established for other individuals like ourselves that [these phenomena] are not true for these three individuals. For individuals other than these three who are below [their levels], given that they possess innate grasping at true existence, it not possible to establish anything as not truly existent within the perspectives of any of their conventions. If [the meaning here] is not as explained here earlier, if [these phenomena] are being established as not being conventional truths for these individuals, this becomes extremely irrelevant reasoning. Because in order to establish that basis [i.e. a fact] as conventional truth [190] that fact must be established as false; so to cite the absence of clinging to true existence as a reason would then be a source of laughter.

The reason why in order for a fact to be established as a conventional truth for a cognition it must be established as false is this. When vase and so on are posited as conventional truth, of the are two senses [of truth] – one in terms of cognition and the other in terms of objective reference – when it is seen that they are not posited in terms of

³⁰⁵ MABh

objective reference but are posited as true from the perspective of that “convention” grasping at true existence alone, one needs to see that without such qualification it does not become true but remains false.

ii” Explaining unique presentation of the afflictions

It seems that it is crucially important to recognize that in this tradition there is an explanation of the afflictions that is unique and different from the upper and lower Abhidharma systems. I shall, therefore, explain this in the following.

Within the [mind] grasping at true existence of things there are two – grasping at true existence of persons and grasping at true existence of phenomena. That these are accepted as the two self-graspings has already been mentioned before. This grasping at true existence is described both in the commentary on *Entering the Middle Way* as well as in the commentary on *Four Hundred Stanzas* as being the afflicted ignorance.³⁰⁶ That this ignorance has been relinquished by disciple and self-enlightened foe-destroyers and in the commentary on *Four Hundred Stanzas* it is mentioned as having been relinquished by bodhisattvas who have obtained forbearance towards the unborn reality.³⁰⁷ Therefore this afflicted ignorance is the opposing force of the knowledge of the suchness of no-self. This, in turn, is to be understood in terms of a mere absence of knowledge or in terms of some other sense. Rather it is understood in terms of direct opposing force, which are the reification of persons and phenomena as intrinsic existence. Understood thus, taking the reification of self-existence of phenomena as an afflicted ignorance and positing the two – graspings at “I” and “mine” as existing by virtue of their own characteristics as egoistic views, these are different compared to the proponents of Abhidharma [system]. [191]

As for the tradition of the proponents of Abhidharma system, as explained in the ninth chapter of the commentary on *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*, they identify grasping at person as self-sufficient, substantial reality as the egoistic view grasping at “I” and grasping at its “mine” as the sphere of control of that person as the egoistic view grasping at “mine.” So there is a great deal of difference [between the two traditions]. Although the grasping at person as self-sufficient, substantial reality is present within those whose mind is not altered by philosophy, grasping at person as existing independently with characteristics different from the aggregates does not exist in those whose mind is not altered by philosophy. Therefore, there are two types of views grasping at extremes as well.

If this is so, how would one prove against those who uphold the position within which the person and phenomena possess existence by virtue of their own characteristics that such graspings are afflicted ignorance and that they constitute the two self-graspings?

The intrinsic existence of person and phenomena will be negated by the reasonings that refute this and at that point their apprehensions will be established as erroneous grasping at true existence. When this is established, the grasping at the person and phenomena as

³⁰⁶ MBh and CST

³⁰⁷ CST

true existence will be established as the two self-graspings. When these are established then the grasping at true existence will be established as the direct opposing force of the knowledge of suchness so it will be established as an [instance of] ignorance. Since one can establish how until this ceases the egoistic view does not come to cease, it will be established as an afflicted ignorance. Therefore, it is extremely important to understand how to posit the unique presentation of the afflictions [according to this tradition].

The manner in which the other afflictions, such as attachment, engage by means of the delusion of grasping at true existence is stated in the following in *Four Hundred Stanzas*:

Just as the body organ [resides] in the body,
Delusion resides in all [the afflictions].³⁰⁸

In the commentary to this, it states:

Delusion, through apprehending the [things] as real [192], constitutes ignorance, it engages by means of excessive superimposition of reality upon the things with respect to their true [properties]. Attachment and so on too engage only by means of attributing characteristics of attractiveness and unattractiveness entirely upon the nature of things postulated by the delusion, they do not engage separately from the delusion. They are also supported by delusion for delusion is the primary factor.³⁰⁹

To explain [this point] as presented here [in the above commentary], up to the point “they engage” indicates how delusion constitutes a grasping at true existence. That attachment and so on engage not differently from delusion [means] that they engage through shared temporal characteristics and not so without it. The reason for this presented in the statement “Attachment and so on” up to “is the primary factor.” Here, the superimposition of attractive and unattractive qualities refers to a cause giving rise to attachment and aversion, namely bringing to the mind distorted projections; so it does not indicate the mode of apprehension of attachment and aversion. Therefore “entirely upon the nature of things postulated by the delusion ...” means that it is on the basis of reifying intrinsically existing qualities of attractiveness and unattractiveness the two – attachment and aversion – engage [with their objects]. It is not the case that within the two objects of attachment and so on – the object of focus and that of its aspect – the true existence postulated by delusion is being indicated as the object of focus of these [afflictions]. Out of the two objects of the two innate self-graspings, their object of focus and their object of aspect, the object of focus is established bases. Since attachment and so on are **conterminous** (*mthsungs ldan*) with delusion their object of focus is the same. Those [mental states] that assume the aspects of desirability towards an object and repulsion or undesirability towards an object derived from the two false mental projections constitute attachment and aversion. [193] So [mental states] with aspects of desirability and undesirability derived from grasping at persons as self-sufficient, substantial reality alone

³⁰⁸ CS

³⁰⁹ CST

is not posited as attachment and aversion. Therefore, the way in which attachment and aversion are defined too is different.

They are “supported by delusion as well” means that through precedence of delusion of grasping at existence [of things] by virtue of their own characteristics attachment and aversion are brought forth. The analogy of “body faculty throughout the body” indicates that just as for the other four faculties there is no support that is apart from the body, likewise all afflictions engage [with their objects] by means of being supported by delusion. They do not engage being divorced of delusion. Therefore the destruction of delusion itself will lead to the destruction of all the afflictions. So, it has been taught, one should accord respect to the discourse on dependent origination, which is the emptiness of intrinsic existence, the antidote [of that delusion].

That this grasping at true existence of things is the ignorance that is the root of cyclic existence is stated in the *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* as well, the *Sixty Verses of Reasoning* too states:

If one finds a locus one is caught
By the twisting snake of afflictions;
Those whose minds have no locus,
They will not be caught [by this snake].³¹⁰

If one finds any locus as the focus of objectification of grasping at true existence, [Nḡrjuna] says that one will be seized by the snake of afflictions. Again he states immediately after this, the following:

In those whose minds possess a locus,
Why would the grave poison of afflictions not arise?³¹¹

This then is the sublime view of the Noble [Nḡrjuna].

As a transitional comment to these last two lines, one reads “To demonstrate that it is impossible to overcome the afflictions to those who objectify forms and so on yet aspire to relinquish the afflictions, he states the following.”³¹² [194] In the subsequent commentary too, one reads the following:

If one objectifies [things] as real entities, such things as no-averting of the myriads of afflictions, such as attachment, will definitely occur. Why is this so? Because, if, say at a time, that real entity is in accord with one’s thought, in that case it would be difficult to avert attachment towards it. If, however, it is not in accord it would be difficult to avert anger and hostility towards it.³¹³

³¹⁰ Sixty Verses, 51.

³¹¹ Ibid, 52 ab.

³¹² Commentary on Sixty Verses?

³¹³ Ibid., p.*

Even if the object happens to be something that is neither attractive nor unattractive ignorance arises [with relation to it], the commentary states.³¹⁴ So while this apprehension of things as existing by virtue of their own characteristics remain engaged in the mind, either attachment or aversion arises. Even if these two are absent, [Candrakīrti] maintains that identical instances of delusion will [continue to] arise. *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* too states:

The mind that possesses an objectifiable focus,
It shall abide in some [real entities];
The mind that is bereft of emptiness,
[Even] when ceased it will arise again;
Just like the absorption devoid of discrimination.³¹⁵

So on this point there is no difference between these two masters and Buddhapaṇita in their interpretation of the intention of Noble [Nāgārjuna]. Because of this significance the explanation that through the path of sixteen characteristics [of the four noble truths], such as impermanence, alone one could attain nirvāṇa is [a statement] an intention [for further meaning]. The identification of afflictions on the basis of such a path too remains incomplete. On the basis of these points one can understand [this is true] also for conceitedness and so on. One should also recognize that there are both innate and acquired kinds for these unique ignorance, egoistic view, and extreme views. Fearing of length, I have not written about these here. Similarly, the teaching on distinguishing nine rounds of lesser and greater degrees within the conceptualization of apprehending phenomena as true existence and relating these to nine levels of path of meditation as their antidotes [195] too should be understood, just like the explanation of distinguishing nine rounds of lesser and greater degrees within the conceptualization grasping at subject and object as being of different substance, as provisional [statements] taught for the benefit of some trainees who are, for the time being, not capable of comprehensively realizing the subtle and grosser levels of selflessness of phenomena.

b” How the mere conventional appears or does not appear to the three individuals

These entities, while not being intrinsic existence they appear to the childish ordinary beings, they thus deceive these beings. Other than these, to the three individuals referred to earlier, because of the very fact of dependent origination of these fabricated entities these [entities] remain a mere conventional; they do not become true existence. As they experience mere unafflicted ignorance characterized as obscuration to knowledge, it [true existence] appears to those Noble Ones who abide in the stages subsequent to meditative equipoise which remains within the sphere of experience of perceptions tainted by ignorance and its propensities. It does not appear to those Noble Ones who abide in meditative equipoise, who remain within the sphere of experience devoid of [dualistic] perceptions.³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Ibid., p.*

³¹⁵ BCA, 9?

³¹⁶ This entire paragraph represents a paraphrase of a paragraph from MABh p.*

In that case, what is recognized as obscuration to knowledge by this tradition? This is as stated in the following in *Commentary on Entering the Middle Way*:

The propensities of ignorance constitute obstacles towards thorough cognition of the objects of knowledge. The propensities of attachment, aversion and so on that exist [within us] are also the causes of the bodily and verbal activities (*lus dang ngag gi 'jug pa*). These propensities of ignorance and attachment and so on will cease only [at the attainment of] omniscience and Buddhahood; not for others.³¹⁷

“The bodily and verbal activities” include those that are present in a foe destroyer, such as jumping like a monkey or calling someone a “commoner” (*rmangs mo*), which are bodily and verbal dysfunctions though proscribed by the Teacher have failed to cease [so far]. [196] “Also” indicates that the propensities of attachment and so on are obstacles to cognize the objects of knowledge as well. Therefore, the propensities of afflictions are obscuration to knowledge and their effects, all the facets of erroneous dualistic appearances are included within this too. Of the two types of propensities of afflictions, one where the seed of the afflictions are recognized as propensities and the other which are the propensities that are not seeds [of afflictions], it is the latter that is posited as obscuration to knowledge. Those for whom all the seeds of afflictions are exhausted, although grasping at true existence does not arise, the impact of the propensities do give rise to cognitions that are erroneous with respect to appearing objects. The Noble Ones who have not yet attained Buddhahood, because they have not relinquished ignorance that is the obscuration to knowledge, there is an intermittent occurrence of the conceptuality of post-meditative states characterized by [dualistic] appearances and [dissolving into] absence of appearances in meditative equipoise. For the Buddhas, however, the aspects of both the ultimate and conventional truths of all phenomena have become manifest or actualized in that he has mastered or realized all without exception. Therefore, since all turnings of conceptualizing mind and mental factors have ceased permanently, there is no intermittent occurrence of meditative equipoise and the conceptuality of post-equipoise states characterized by [dualistic] appearances. The term “permanently” indicates that the ceasing [of dualistic appearances] for other Noble Ones during their meditative equipoise is temporary. Therefore, there is for them intermittent occurrence of meditative equipoise and post-equipoise states.

The statement “Therefore, because they experience ignorance that constitutes obscuration of knowledge” is not a reason for [these Noble Ones] possessing [dualistic] appearances; rather it is to substantiate [the point] that absence and presence of appearances occur intermittently [respective to occurrence of] states of equipoise and post-equipoise periods. The process of mind and mental factors [referred to here] is understood in terms of conceptualization. [For example] *Clear Words* states:

What is the ultimate truth? Whereas if there is no turnings of the mind what need is there to speak of [197] the letters as well?³¹⁸

³¹⁷ MABh

³¹⁸ PSP p.* Tsongkhapa’s point here is that in drawing parallels between the absence of the “turnings of the mind” (*sems kyi rgyu ba*) and the

c” How from the perspectives of ordinary being and Noble Ones [a truth] becomes ultimate and conventional

[Here the commentary states:]

That which is an ultimate truth for the ordinary beings, this itself is a mere conventional for those Noble Ones who possess spheres of experience within which [dualistic] appearances are present. That which is the emptiness of its intrinsic nature is the ultimate truth.³¹⁹

The meaning of the first part [of this citation] is this. [The phenomena,] such as vase and so on, which are held by the ordinary beings to be ultimately existent are revealed to be mere conventional for the three Noble Ones referred to earlier those who possess the [dualistic] appearances of post-equipoise states that are subsequent to emerging out of meditative equipoise. Therefore, for these individuals these [phenomena] are eliminated as true and not as being conventional truth. It is also not the case that it indicates that the object of apprehension of the ordinary beings who grasp at vases and so on as existing on the ultimate level are conventional for the Noble Ones. For this is impossible.

The meaning of the later part of the text is this. It indicates that the nature of dependently originated conventional truths – the ultimate reality – is the ultimate truth of the Noble Ones. Therefore those who speak contrary to the text by asserting that a single basis, for example, a vase is itself a conventional truth from the ordinary being’s perspective and ultimate truth from the point of view of the Noble One is speaking so through failure to understand that in order for [something] to be a conventional truth from the point of view of a cognition it must be negated as true from the point of view of that very cognition. [The commentary] states that “the ultimate truth of the Buddhas is the nature itself. Because it does not deceive it is the ultimate truth; and this is to be known by the Buddhas individually [in their own ways].”³²⁰ The term “itself” in the expression “it is the nature itself” is an exclusive term and what it excludes is the other Noble Ones whose ultimate truth is posited as being characterized as absent of appearances during meditative equipoise and characterized as being endowed with appearances during the post-equipoise states. [198] Thus it indicates that unlike this kind of intermittence, [for the Buddhas] it is the ultimate reality upon which they remain equipoised on the nature at all times. With the statement “Because it does not deceive..” the intention to indicate that this ultimate truth is not true existence so that which abides from the perspective of the vision of suchness as undeceiving is described as the meaning of truth.

2” Explaining the ultimate truth

operations of the letters in the context of defining what ultimate truth is, Candrakīrti is indicating that he is speaking specifically of the turnings of the conceptualizing thought rather than mind in general. For the Buddhas, although the turnings of conceptualizing thoughts have ceased, the turnings of the mind still remains.

³¹⁹ MABh

³²⁰ MABh

This has two parts:

- i” Explaining the meaning of the lines of the root text
- ii” Repudiation of objections against this

The first is as follows:

**Through cataract’s force falling of hairs and so on,
Such distorted realities are imputed;
What its reality is is seen by the one with clean eyes;
Likewise understand [the case to be] in this context.**

[The commentary states:]

Now I wish to present the ultimate truth. Because the ultimate truth cannot be expressed by words, because it is not an object of cognition that follow after the words, it cannot be presented directly. So to those who wish to listen, to help elucidate its nature, I shall give an analogy drawn from the ordinary person’s own experience.³²¹

The meaning of not being the object of cognition and language as stated here is as indicated by the statement “it cannot be presented directly.” This is appears as “cannot be presented in direct perception” in Naktsō’s translation. Its sense is as found in the following *Clear Words* in the context of the statement that suchness cannot be understood from others:

Just as when those with cataracts see false realities like falling of hairs and so on, even though those without a cataract may show [that there are no hair falling], they [those with cataracts] are incapable of cognizing the fact as it is, that is to cognize in the manner of not seeing the reality of hair falling like those without cataracts.³²²

So although to those with cataracts someone who has no cataracts might show by asserting “here, there are no falling hair,” [Candrakīrti] states that they will not cognize the absence of falling hair in a manner similar to the sight of those without cataracts. So, although the listener does not cognize in such manner, it does mean that he does not realize the absence of falling hair. Taking this as an analogy, when suchness is presented, although [others] do not realize it in a manner similar to the vision of those who are free of the affect of the cataract of ignorance, [199] it is not that he maintains that they do not realize suchness in general. Therefore, it is not the case that ultimate truth is incapable of being expressed by the definitive scriptures that deal with the profound meaning as well those speech that present it and that it is incapable of being realized by cognitions that follow after these statements.

³²¹ MABh

³²² PSP

Due to their eyes being affected by cataracts when those with cataracts see the falling of hair and so on, which include flies, in the containers in their hand that contain food and drinks, such as *bse ru*, once they have falsely conceived what they perceive to be hair, flies and so on, they turn [the items] in the container and again. Seeing this effort, someone with intact eyes approaches that person and even though he directs his focus on the basis where the reality of hair and so on [was being seen by those with cataracts] not only does he fail to perceive such forms as hair, but he fails to perceive any properties supported by such hair. Also when someone with cataracts reveals his thoughts to the one free of cataracts with the statement “I see falling of hair,” the one free of cataract, wishing to help dispel the false conception might endeavor to negate by asserting “There is no hair here,” there is no question of such speaker as denigrating the existence of falling hair. The reality of [the supposed] falling hair seen by the one with cataracts is actually the one that is seen by the one who is devoid of cataracts; it is not the one seen by the one with cataracts. Just as in the case of these two examples, one should understand this in the context of the referent. The manner in which this should be recognized is the following. [200]

The realities of aggregates, elements, sources and so on, which are perceived by those whose mind is tainted or adversely affected by the cataract of ignorance and do not see suchness, these are the conventional realities of aggregates and so on, which resemble the perception of falling hair by someone with cataracts. That very reality of aggregates and so on which is perceived by those who do so see suchness, what the Buddhas who are free of obscuration to knowledge – the residual dispositions of ignorance – see as the nature of aggregates and so on in a manner similar to the not seeing of falling hair by someone who does not have cataracts, this object is the ultimate truth of the Buddhas.

ii” Repudiation of objections against this

[Question:] Just as the eyes not tainted by cataracts do not even perceive the appearance of falling hair, if the Buddhas do not see the conventional truths like aggregates and so on, which appear to the mind adversely affected by ignorance, would not these [phenomena] become non-existent? For if they exist they must be seen by the Buddhas. And if the conventional truths like aggregates and so on do not exist, there will be no attainment of Buddhahood because the being who first generate the awakening mind is someone who possess the pollutant of ignorance.

[Reply:] To explain that this fault does not ensue, there are two modes to which the Buddha’s gnosis cognizes the objects of knowledge – the mode in which the objects of knowledge of ultimate truth are known and the mode in which the objects of knowledge of conventional truths are known. Of these the first is the knowing of the suchness of the appearances of the conventional truths in manner of not seeing them. The second is, given that no indirect cognition – that is knowing though without directly appearing – can be posited for the Buddha, [the conventional truths] are known within the perspectives of the gnosis knowing reality in its manifoldness in a manner of subject and object appearing as being distinct. [201] Although the Buddha’s knowledge of reality-in-its-

manifoldness is not an instance of aggregates and so on appearing on the basis of being tainted by residual dispositions of ignorance, that which appears to other beings whose consciousness is tainted by ignorance must appear to the Buddha. It is untenable that this appearance does not exist and if that conventional truth exists, it must be perceived by [the Buddha's] knowledge of [the world] as they seem to be. Although for the visual consciousness free of cataracts there is appearance of something as falling hair, this does not entail that such appearance does not exist [at all. This is unlike in the case of the Buddha.

Until the residual dispositions of erroneous dualistic appearances cease, one is not capable of generating direct realization of reality-in-its-manifoldness and reality-as-it-is within a single entity [of cognition], one has to, therefore, experience meditative equipoise and post-equipoise states intermittently. The knowing of the two [reality-in-its-manifoldness and reality-as-it-is] on the basis of a single instance [of cognition] does not occur. Once when the residual dispositions of all errors are extinguished, the arising of the two gnosis as a single entity [of cognition] on the basis of each and every instance becomes uninterrupted. So there is no need for an intermittence in the realization of the two objects of knowledge – sometimes realizing one while at other times realizing the other – within a single moment of time. Therefore the statement “Even with a single instance of knowledge/ He pervades the entire field of knowledge”³²³ is not inconsistent either.

Although the two gnosis are identical in terms of their entity, that there is not the slightest contradiction in there being two modes of knowing with respect to the two objects is a unique quality of the Buddhas alone. Taking the mode of knowing of ultimate truth alone to be the Buddha's mode of knowing and to assert that the knowledge of [the world] as it seems is not present in the Buddha's mind and that it is confined to the mental continuum of the trainees alone, some denigrate the mode of knowing of the Buddhas. Some, claiming that even the mode of knowing of ultimate truth does not exist in the Buddha's mind, they appear to denigrate both of the two gnosis of the Buddhas. [202] I shall address some of the remaining questions [later in the text] in the context of the resultant fruits.³²⁴

[Question:] Isn't it the case that ceasing of all dualistic appearances, the nature of such a truth, is no where to be seen? So in what manner does the Buddhas *see* the ultimate truth?

[Reply:] It is true that within the perspective of seeing suchness, since dualistic appearances have ceased, it is not seen in the manner of [subject-object] duality. However [the Buddhas] sees it in a manner of not seeing, this I shall state here.³²⁵

The way in which this [above statement] serves as a response to the objection is that this gnosis that knows reality-as-it-is directly sees the suchness of aggregates and so on, and

³²³ *. *?

³²⁴ This is a reference to the latter part chapter ten which pertains to the qualities of the Buddha's mind. See pp.*.* of this volume.

† Both this question and reply are paraphrases from Candrakīrti's *Commentary on Entering the Middle Way* p.*

the non-existence of aggregates and so on within the perspective of that seeing *is* the suchness of these [phenomena], and their suchness must be seen in a manner of not seeing aggregates and so on. Auto-commentary states:

Since he actualizes the nature alone without contacting the produced entities, and because he has internalized this he is called the Buddha [the awakened one].³²⁶ So since it states that the Buddha's gnosis that knows the ultimate truth internalizes the ultimate reality alone without contacting the subject, this is identical in meaning with the statement that [the Buddha's gnosis] sees the suchness of aggregates and so on in a manner of not seeing aggregates and so on. The meaning of the citation "Not seeing is the most excellent seeing" too is not that one accepts [the notion of] seeing what is not seen at all; rather, as explained before, not seeing conceptual elaborations is defined as seeing absence of elaborations. So seeing and not seeing is not determined on the basis of a single basis. This said, *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom* states:

Not seeing form and not seeing feelings as well;
Not seeing discriminations nor the intentions;
He who does not see consciousness, mind and mental faculty,
He sees reality so reveals the Tatḡatha. [203]

Saying "I see space" beings who express it in words,
How does he see the space so it must be examined.
Likewise the seeing of reality is revealed by the Tatḡatha;
This sight cannot be expressed through any other analogy.³²⁷

Thus what is not seen is stated to be the five aggregates and what is seen is referred to as "reality," the meaning of which is the suchness. This is similar to the statement "He who sees dependent origination sees reality."³²⁸

For example, space is defined in terms of mere elimination of obstructive property and seeing or cognizing this is similar to not seeing obstructive or occupying property, which is the object of negation, in a context where if it were to exist it must be perceivable. Here what is seen is the space while what is not seen refers to obstructive or occupying property. The seeing of suchness in the manner of seeing blue, not in the manner of seeing similar in the case of the analogy, this is negated by the final line [of the citation]. To substantiate the point that [the Buddha's gnosis] sees in a manner of not seeing, the following is cited from *Entering the Two Truths*:

O celestial child, if on the ultimate level the ultimate truth becomes something that has the nature of being the object of body, speech and mind, it does not belong to what is counted as "ultimate truth." For it will become a conventional truth. Nevertheless, O celestial child, the ultimate truth is in the ultimate sense beyond all conventions, it has no instantiations, it is unborn, unceasing, it is free

³²⁶ MABh

³²⁷ sdud pa tshigs su bcad pa *

³²⁸ Sutra*

of what is to be spoken and of speech, it is free of what is to be known and knowing [mind].³²⁹

The meaning of the first citation of the sutra is this. If the ultimate truth is, within the perspective that sees the ultimate truth, is not seen in a manner of not seeing the conventional truths, such as aggregates and so on, but becomes an object similar to the spheres of experiences of body, such as form, of speech and of the mind, [204] then one is not free of conceptual elaborations within the perspective that sees the ultimate truth. Therefore it does not become ultimate truth; rather it becomes a conceptual elaboration of conventional truth. Understood thus, this [first citation] becomes a substantiation of [the point that the Buddha's gnosis] sees in a manner of not seeing.

The meaning of the second citation of the sutra is this. That within the perspective that sees ultimate truth directly there is no instantiation of ultimate truth indicates there are no multiple differentiation of properties [to ultimate truth]. As for the other three [characteristics], they are easy [to understand].³³⁰ That within that perspective it is free of act and agent of speech is easy [to explain]. Although the ultimate truth can be posited as the object of knowledge of that [gnosis] that it is not contradictory for the act and agent of speech to be absent within the perspective of that gnosis. This is because the duality of act and agent of speech is posited exclusively from the point of view of the conventional mind. This is like, for example, although one can posit the inferential rational cognition as the subject and the ultimate truth as its object, the subject-object activity is not posited from the perspective from that rational cognition.

The meaning of the citation "O celestial child, the ultimate truth is imbued with the supreme qualities of all the aspects, which transcends [being the] object including [even] the omniscient gnosis. For instance, it is not as expressed by the statement "This is the ultimate truth." How is this so? All phenomena are false and are characterized by deceptivity"³³¹ is this. Up to the [omniscient gnosis] indicates how the ultimate truth transcends the object of the omniscient gnosis while the manner in which it transcends is indicated by [the second part], that is from "How is this so?" up to "characterized by deceptivity." For instance, when the statement is made "This is the ultimate truth," to the thought that follows after that speech, the subject and object appear as two distinct separated entities. [The ultimate truth] lies beyond the sphere of [the Buddha's] omniscient gnosis knowing reality-as-it-is in a manner perceived [by that dualistic thought]. This is because all phenomena of dualistic appearances are false and deceptive so they do not exist within the perspective that sees only suchness that is undeceiving. [205] Such is the meaning.

All of these are sources that substantiate the point that within the perspective of direct seeing of suchness conventional truths, such as aggregates, are not perceived. Therefore

³²⁹ bden gnis la 'jug pa *

³³⁰ The three remaining characteristics of ultimate truth being referred to here are (1) being unborn, (2) unceasing and (3) being free of distinctions of what is spoken of and the speech and what is known and the knowing mind."

³³¹ Cited in MABh, p.*

within the perspective of direct seeing of suchness all dichotomies like entity and non-entity and so on are not possible because these conceptual elaborations are not perceived in terms of their own realities. So, in terms of actuality, it is only the Noble Ones who are valid with respect to suchness; while those who are not Noble Ones, they are not valid in actual fact. Therefore, no injury can be inflicted by the worldly [perspective] to the negation of arising-from-another within the perspective of the Noble Ones.

iv') Presenting the objections [that demonstrate] how worldly perspectives contradict what is negated

This is as follows.

**If the worldly [perspectives] are veridical,
Since the worldly sees suchness what need is there
For other Noble Ones? What use is Noble One's path?
That the foolish is valid is illogical as well.**

**Given that the worldly is never veridical,
In the context of suchness there is no harm from the worldly.**

Someone, wishing to speak of the adverse affects from the worldly [perspective] upon the negation of arising-from-another on the ultimate level, might accept the worldly seeing as veridical with respect to suchness even in the context of a thorough analysis into suchness. If so, and if the worldly seeing is valid with respect to suchness, ordinary worldly people will then directly see or realize suchness. Given that this too would have to be since beginningless, you would have to admit that they have eliminated ignorance [as well]. In that case, what need is there for the other Noble Ones in order to realize suchness directly? There would be no such need. What is the point then of seeking the path of the Noble Ones? This would be pointless. That ignorant ordinary worldly people are veridical with respect to suchness is illogical as well. Therefore, given that in the context of analysis into suchness the worldly seeing is never veridical at all with respect to suchness, no injury can be inflicted by the worldly perspective in the context of probing into suchness.

Maintaining that [the line] "Given that the worldly is never veridical" indicates that this system does not accept any valid cognition, [206] some assert that this system is incorrect, while others claim that it is excellent [because of this]. Both of these make assertions without understanding the standpoint of this master [Candrakīrti] and reveal their own status. They appeared to have understood what has been stated to show that worldly seeing is never veridical with respect to suchness as [indicating] that valid cognition is not accepted in general. As for valid cognition and its object too, they must be understood, just as explained in the *Clear Words* where, having refuted these as existing by virtue of an essence, positing of mutually contingent valid cognition and object is explained. This shall be expounded later on [in the text].

v') Presenting the manner in which worldly perspectives can harm

This is presented in the following.

**If the worldly facts are eliminated by worldly renown,
Then this will be harmed by the worldly [perspective].**

One might ask, “In that case, in what way can the worldly perspective do harm [a negation]?” The facts that are known to and established to the world, if these are eliminated by worldly convention itself, then that person will be harmed by the worldly perspective. For example, when someone asserts “Someone snatched away a substance of mine,” another person asks him “What is that substance?” to which he replies “It is a vase.” To this, if the other person retorts “Vase is not a substance because it is an measurable object; like a dream vase, for example,” it is the object of this kind of **refutative argument** that will be harmed by the worldly perspective. In contrast, when suchness is being presented on the basis of taking the person who is learned in the ultimate truth to be veridical – that is in dependence upon the perspective on the ultimate truth by the Noble Ones – there is no harm [that can arise] from the worldly perspective.

The implication of the statement “The learned ones should, on the basis of this point, analyze other issues as well”³³² is the following. “I am not the owner of the vase and Devadhatta is not the snatcher [of my vase] because ...” Or when someone says “It grew in my farm,” another asks “What is grown?” to which one replies “It is a shoot.” To this, if the other person retorts “A shoots does not possess birth because it is a measurable object,” [207 or [asserts] “just like a dream person or a dream shoot.” So [with this statement Candrakirti] demonstrates how what are considered today great Middle Way reasonings as being [vulnerable to] harm from the worldly perspective.

ii” Resolving objections because even from the perspective of worldly convention arising from another does not exist

Thus, having rejected [the objection that the negation of arising-from-another is] harmed by the worldly perspective on the basis of even accepting arising-from-another on the level of worldly convention, now, in the following, it is explained that even within the vision of the worldly perspective there is no arising-from-another. Hence no harm [can affect] even those who, while abiding within the worldly view, wishes to negate arising-from-another.

**When someone plants the seed
And claims that I sired this son or thinks
That I planted this tree, so arising from another
Does not exist even from the worldly [perspective].**

For the reason that when someone points to another who possesses male characteristics the other responds with the statement “I produced this son.” This being said it is not the case that the father extracted someone with full characteristics of a male from his body

³³² MABh

and implanted it into the womb of the mother. What is it then? It is that he planted or placed a mere seed of the son, an impure substance, inside the mother's womb. So in that the father, having placed the cause of the son, shows the son [to be his product], it is not the case that he conceives the seed and the son to be different by virtue of their own characteristics. That this is so is clearly determined in the world. Therefore, even on the worldly level, there is no grasping at the impure seed and the son and the barley seed and the sprout as arising from another. For if these are conceived to be different by virtue of their own essence, then like with respect to some other different person, one would not point to the son and claim "I produced him." Similarly, when as a result of planting a seed of a tree a tree grew [from it], the thought occurs "I planted this tree." So extend here too [arguments] such as there is no arising-from-another within the worldly perspective and so on as before.

Although the two seeds that were planted are not a tree and son respectively, [208] when, as result of planting these two, a tree and a son are born, it is possible [to legitimately] posit the fact of someone pointing to [one of] the two and saying "I planted this." For example, although the hand that was sick and healed is not the person, because the hand was sick and healed, one can posit the fact of the person being sick and being healed.

The negation of the cause and effect as being of different realities in terms of their intrinsic nature is something that definitely depends upon reasoning that probes into suchness. Therefore the fact of arising-from-another, which is accepted by proponents of other philosophical schools is arising-from-another by virtue of one's own characteristics. It is not simply the existence as a different reality. It is also not the case that this remains unestablished within the perspective of the world.

The meaning of the statement "Arising-from-another does not exist even from the worldly perspective" is not only to indicate that ordinary worldly people do not grasp at substantial cause and its effect, such as a seed and the sprout, to exist as different by virtue of their own characteristics, we should understand that it also shows that even on the nominal level arising-from-another does not exist. In the commentary to the refutation of arising-from-both too one reads "So just as it has been shown how arising-from-self and arising-from-another are untenable on the level of worldly convention and on the ultimate level as well, likewise, for those who propound [arising from] both too, on the basis of the arguments stated before, this is impossible."³³³ Thus the non-existence of arising-from-another even on the nominal level is clearly stated. *The Clear Words* too, in response to the question "If there is no arising of things from oneself, from another, from both and from no cause, how did the Blessed One speak of [the arising of] volitions due to the condition of ignorance?," states "I shall explain this. This is on the conventional level; [209] not on the level of suchness."³³⁴ Thus [Candrakīrti] explains that the engendering of volition by ignorance and so on is on the conventional level and not on the ultimate level. In response to the question "What kind of a system of conventional truth you are speaking of?" he replies "I accept the existence of conventional truth in

³³³ MABh p. *

³³⁴ PSP, p. *

terms of mere conditionality; not on the basis of accepting the four positions.”³³⁵ Thus he explains clearly how in accepting [the notion of] arising of this from that condition on the conventional level, one does not accept arising from [any of] the four positions. So the claim that in this system arising-from-another is not rejected on the conventional level is statement [coming from] ill understanding of this [Candrakīrti’s] tradition.

c” Presenting the merits of such refutation

To demonstrate that for the way wherein there is no existence by virtue of one’s own essence as has been explained so far there is the merit of not falling into the extremes of eternalism and nihilism because of affirming dependent origination free of absolutism and annihilationism, it reads:

**Given that the sprout is not different from the seed
So at the time of sprout there is no cessation of seed;
Since one does not exist while the other is present,
Assert not that the seed is present at the time of sprout.**

If the sprout is something that is intrinsically different from the seed the two – the seed and the sprout – cannot be a cause and effect. Therefore, without doubt while the sprout exists the seed’s continuum must come to an end. This is because the seed and the sprout [then] become unrelated so even if the sprout exists this will not help in anyway for [ensuring] the **type-continuum** of the seed does not come to an end. For example, the presence of a cow-like non-cow does not help in anyway to ensure the non-cessation of the similar-kind continuum [of cow] when a cow dies. Also the presence of ordinary beings does not help in anyway to the Noble Ones not to sever the continuum of their own cyclic existence.

Since this is so for the reason why it is not inconsistent for the seed and the sprout to be cause and effect within the standpoint wherein the two are not intrinsically existing different things, because of that same reason when the sprout is present it is not that the seed has ceased, that is its continuum has come to an end. So [the extreme of] annihilationism is abandoned. Since it has been explained many times that the seed has disintegrated at the time of the sprout [210], the meaning of seed’s coming to cease has been explained by the commentary to its continuum coming to an end.³³⁶ As the non-disintegration of the seed is rejected, [Candrakīrti] tells us, so the continuum of the seed coming to an end is understood in terms of coming to an end of its **type-continuum**.

Because the seed and the sprout do not exist simultaneously and [also] because the seed is transposed on the sprout, the non-disintegration of seed at the time of the sprout has been rejected. Because of this too we do not say that the seed exists at the time of the sprout so [the extreme of] eternalism too is negated. These statements [capture] the meaning of the following [lines from] *Vast Manifestations Sutra*:

³³⁵ PSP, p. *

³³⁶ MABh

If the seed exists the sprout would be the same.
What is the seed? It is not the sprout;
It is not something other nor it is it;
Thus it's neither eternal nor annihilated but reality itself.³³⁷

The meaning of these lines is this. If the seed were to exist, the sprout too, which is caused by the seed, would come into being in exactly the same manner. When it comes into being, since it cannot do so from something other than the seed, if one thinks that the seed and the sprout are of the same reality, [the sutra responds] although the sprout does not into being from something other than the seed it is not that the seed itself becomes transferred onto the sprout. Why is this so? Because the sprout is neither intrinsically different from nor intrinsically identical in nature with the seed. When both of these two positions are rejected the nature of the sprout is **disclosed/illuminated/revealed** as a reality free of [the extremes of] eternalism and nihilism. This point is stated in the same sutra in the following:

The volitions are conditioned by ignorance;
These volitions do not exist on the level of suchness.
Both volition and ignorance are empty;
For they are devoid of intrinsically real motion.³³⁸

The first presents the reasoning sign, which is that the volitions originate from ignorance. The second line presents the thesis, namely, that the volitions do not exist on the level of suchness. [211] The third line presents how both the cause and effect are empty, while the fourth line shows the manner in which they are empty. "Motion" here refers to manifest act of conditioning and being devoid of this suggests that volition is empty of volition. "This too is devoid of intrinsic existence" presents the qualification of the object of negation, which shares the same meaning as "non-existence on the level of suchness." The meaning of this sutra is presented in the treatise *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* as well:

That which originates in dependence upon something,
That is, at least for a while, not its own reality;
Neither is it something other than that;
Hence it's neither eternal nor annihilated.³³⁹

d" Demonstrating how intrinsic arising does not exist in any manner

This has two parts:

- i" Refuting the view that accepts existence by virtue of one's own characteristic
- ii" Repudiation of objections raised against such refutation

³³⁷ Gyacher rol pai mdo, p.*

³³⁸ Ibid., p.*

³³⁹ MMK, *

The first has three parts:

- 1') Refuting with the consequence that the Noble One's meditative equipoise will be the cause for the disintegration of things
- 2') Refuting with the consequence that the nominal truths will be resistant to the analysis of reason
- 3') Refuting with the consequence that arising could not be negated on the ultimate level

The first is as follows.

**If one's own characteristic is dependent,
Denigrating this things will become disintegrated;
Since emptiness will become a cause for the disintegration of things,
This is untenable so it [intrinsic characteristic] does not exist.**

As [Candrakīrti] states "One must accept without doubt the statement 'There are no phenomena at all that arise intrinsically','" it is logical to assert that this fact must be definitely accepted. One should not assert to the contrary and say "It is not tenable to posit [any] accepted standpoints here."

If this is not so and if the one's own characteristics of form, feeling and so on – that is their intrinsic nature that exists by virtue of its own essence – were to arise in dependence upon causes and conditions, then when the yogi realizes directly all phenomena to be empty of intrinsic existence, he will realize emptiness in a manner of denigrating that nature of things. This is because, though the meditative equipoise is not supposed to perceive [phenomena such as] form and so on, yet if they exist by virtue of their own characteristics [212] the meditative equipoise must perceive them, which, however, it does not. At that point, these entities become nonexistent. If there are nonexistent, it is the the meditative equipoise that made what existed previously as disintegrated or ceased. In that case, since they require the meditative equipoise as the cause for their disintegration, so just as a hammer and so on are the cause for the disintegration of a vase and so on, the seeing of emptiness too will be the cause for the disintegration of entities so a factor for denigrating them. This, however, illogical as well. Therefore, the existence of things by means of one's own characteristic does not exist. So one must not accept intrinsic arising at all times.

On this those Middle Way proponents who accept arising by virtue of one's own characteristics, because they maintain that even though [things] exist by virtue of their own characteristics this does not constitute true existence, they assert that if phenomena such as form and so on exist by virtue of their own characteristics they need not be perceived by [the mind that] directly sees suchness. Though they may assert this, that this much constitutes true existence has already been explained before and because of what shall be explained later on the ill consequences [to their position] cannot be overcome.

Here, in the commentary, [Candrakīrti writes] "*The Heap of Jewels Sutra* states: 'Upali, furthermore, this middle path that peruses the individual characteristics of phenomena

perfectly does not make phenomena empty through emptiness. The phenomena are empty ...” He cites similar statements made with respect to signlessness, wishlessness and absence of manifest conditioning as well the unborn and unorigination. If phenomena possess nature that exists by virtue of its own characteristic, given that they would not be empty in their own right, the statement “All phenomena are empty” would become incorrect. One will then not negate existence by virtue of one’s own essence [213] but will have to show them to be empty of something else, one will contradict the statement “It does not make phenomena empty through emptiness.” So [this citation] demonstrates how the middle path, when it peruses the individual characteristics of phenomena, it reveals the phenomena to be empty of existence by virtue of their own essence in their own right. This sutra negates also the Consciousness Only school’s assertion that the dependent nature is not empty because it exists by virtue of its own characteristic but it is empty in that there are no substantially different subject and object. *The [Four] Hundred Stanzas* states:

It’s not that what is not empty is seen as empty;
 “May nirvaṇa become mine,”
 Not to go beyond sorrow with such a wrong view,
 This has been taught by the Tatṛgatha.³⁴⁰

The following from *Fundamental Wisdom* too explains the meaning of the previous sutra:

That emptiness delivers from all views
 Has been stated by the Conquerors;
 So he who views emptiness [as real],
 This, the Buddha taught, to be irredeemable.³⁴¹

This is also the intended meaning of the statement that all phenomena are empty of their own essence. Those who assert that the vase not being empty of itself but being empty of true existence is extrinsic emptiness so the vase being empty of vase is intrinsic emptiness is totally incorrect. If the vase is empty of itself the vase would be devoid of vase and if one does not exist in oneself since it does not exist in any other thing, the vase will be totally nonexistent. In that case, since it will similarly true of all other entities, the person who is saying this will be nonexistent. Thus none of the presentations, such as [things are] empty of this and not of that will become impossible. Some claim this kind of emptiness to be perfect [emptiness] while others assert this to be annihilationist emptiness. Both of these remain outside the Buddhas and their children affirmation, not just once, of dependent originations as being free of the extremes of eternalism and nihilism. [214] In particular, those who assert that the conventional truths must be set forth as being empty of themselves and accept this to be an annihilationist emptiness is most inappropriate. There is none among the four [Buddhist] schools that, having recognized a view to be annihilationist, strives to generate that within one’s own mind.

³⁴⁰ CS, *

³⁴¹ MMK, *

Therefore, since this is a case of a chosen basis not being the nature of that object of negation and that basis being empty of that which is being negated, while equal in being empty, the fact of all phenomena being empty of existence by virtue of their own characteristics is the meaning of being empty of one's own essence. In contrast, the other forms of being empty do not constitute being empty of one's own essence. The reason why this is so is because while the effect of having established by valid cognition the first mode of being empty remains unebbed, it is impossible for a reification of that basis in terms of true existence or reality on the basis of philosophical reflection to arise. As for the latter [mode of being empty], even though one may have established that fact through valid cognition and its effect remains unebbed, there is no contradiction for reification of [things] as true existence or true meaning on the basis of philosophical speculation.

2') Refuting with the consequence that the nominal truths will be resistant to the analysis of reason

[The commentary states:]

Here some assert this. 'It is logical that since there is no arising on the ultimate level arising from oneself and another are negated, however, as for the nature of form, feeling and so on that are perceived by the two valid cognitions, this will arise without doubt from [something that is] another. For if one does not accept this, how can one speak of the two truths? There will be one truth alone. Therefore arising-from-another does exist. Thus do they assert this.'³⁴²

Those who argue thus appear to accept the absence of arising on the ultimate level but accept arising-from-another on the nominal level, these are exclusively Svatantrika-Madhyamakas. The assertion that if arising-from-another in terms of an intrinsic arising does not exist on the conventional level there will be only one truth alone means that if arising by virtue of one's own characteristics does not exist conventionally correct conventional truths will become nonexistent. [215] When this happens the conventional truth becomes impossible so there will be the ultimate truth alone. In response to this [point the commentary] states the following:

Although you are right, ultimately there are no two truths. We find statements such as the following. "O monks, the truth that is ultimate meaning is only one. It is thus: It is nirvāṇa, which is characterized by non-deception. All conditioned things are false and deceptive."³⁴³

The meaning of these statements is this. Given that the meaning of truth one has accepted is non-deceptivity, [phenomena] will become truth in the sense of being non-deceptive alone, so [Candrakīrti] states here "Although you are right." "Ultimately ..." means that within the perspective of seeing suchness there is no dichotomy of conventional and ultimate truth. For within that perspective [the Buddha] has spoken of the ultimate truth alone. "The truth, the ultimate" refers to the ultimate truth. That within that perspective

³⁴² MABh

³⁴³ MABh

the conventional truths do not exist can be understood through the statement that they are characterized by deception. To summarise, the meaning is this: If phenomena exist by virtue of their own characteristics, conditioned things will then be established as false and deceptive. And since there will be no conventional truth there will be no two truths. Whereas for the standpoint that has no existence by virtue of one's own characteristic both the conventional and ultimate truth exist.

Because of the previous citation, the thought might occur that since it has been taught that nirvaṇa alone is true and that other conditioned things are false, so although the conditioned things not exist by virtue of their own characteristics, nirvaṇa, which is the ultimate truth, exist by virtue of its own characteristic. Should one think thus [one should understand] that the truth being referred to here [with respect to nirvaṇa] is explained in terms of being non-deceptive. So [the truth] is explained in terms of the meaning of non-deception. It is therefore not the truth in the sense of existing by virtue of one's own characteristic. From the statement that all conditioned things are false and deceptive [216] too one can discern that the meaning of truth in the previous context is that of non-deceptivity. *Commentary to the Sixty Stanzas* too explains that just as the conditioned things deceive the childish through appearing in distorted ways, in the same sense, given that nirvaṇa does not deceive them by appearing to them in such ways, nirvaṇa is taught to be true while others are untrue.³⁴⁴ Therefore, the distinction between truth and untruth must be taken without doubt in terms of the meaning of being deceptive and being non-deceptive.

The reason why the commentary on *Sixty Stanzas* states nirvaṇa to be true on the conventional level is to indicate that nirvaṇa's existence as ultimate truth is on the level of conventional truth. It is not to indicate that [Candrakīrti] accepts it to be true existence on the nominal level. This being so conventional truth is a means by which one enters the ultimate truth. Therefore, just as one entertains conventions of the world without probing into whether things arise from self or another, in the same manner, Madhyamaka too accepts [conventional truth].

**When these things are thoroughly probed,
Apart from their suchness nothing else,
No locus is found so therefore one must not
Thoroughly probe the nominal truths.**

Thus when one thoroughly analyzes these entities such as form, feeling and so on, in such terms as “Does it arise from itself or does it arise from another?” apart from non-arising and non-ceasing on the ultimate level that is suchness, no locus can be found for aspects other than these, such as arising and so on. Therefore, with respect to the worldly conventional truths one should not apply such thorough analysis as “from itself, or from another” and so on. The seeings of the worldly perspective, such as “If this exists, that ensues,” this much should be accepted on the basis of entertaining conventions that are conditional upon the worldly [transactions]. □ryadeva states:

³⁴⁴ *Sixty Stanzas commentary*, p.*

Just as the barbarian cannot be
Sustained by another [foreign] language, - [217]
Likewise except for worldly [conventions],
The worldly people cannot be sustained.³⁴⁵

The *Fundamental Wisdom* too states:

Without relying on the conventions
The ultimate truth cannot be realized.
Without realizing the ultimate truth
Nirva^o cannot be attained.³⁴⁶

Reverting the Arguments also states:

Without accepting the conventions
We shall not engage in exposition.³⁴⁷

Here, “analysis” and “non-analysis” refer to analysis or non-analysis into suchness. For this it is critical to understand from what mode of analysis does it constitute analysis into suchness so I shall explain this a little.

According to Prasa^ogika system, from the point where one, being unsatisfied by conventions as designations, analyzes, for instance, in the case of the statement “The sprout arises,” whether it arises from itself or does it arise from another, this must be posited as probing into suchness. Therefore one should recognize that this is totally different from [everyday] worldly enquires of “Where did you come from?” “Where are going to?” “Where is it, outside or inside?” and so on. For the Svataⁿtrika-Madhyamaka, however, this much alone is not posited as constituting an analysis into suchness. When one probes in terms of whether [something] is being posited as existent on the power of appearing to a cognition as described earlier, or whether it is being posited as established in terms of objective facts not posited on the power [of appearing to a cognition], it is at this point [the enquiry] constitutes an analysis into suchness. Due to the difference in their identification of the criteria of object of negation two different limits of analysis into suchness emerges.

Failing to comprehend this, one takes all unanalyzed transactions as being distorted like, for example, the case of Devadatta’s failure to arrive where first one mistakes into thinking that he has arrived and later when he examines whether or not Devadatta has arrived he comes to understand that he has [in actual fact] not arrived. [In contrast] one takes all analyzed transactions as undistorted. [218] This is not the approach of either Middle Way [philosophy] nor of the epistemologists. For in both systems one finds numerous instances of unanalyzed transactions that are established by valid cognition. As

³⁴⁵ CS, *

³⁴⁶ MMK, *

³⁴⁷ VV, *

I have addressed [this point] elsewhere I shall not elaborate here further. One should understand, therefore, if one analyzes the conventional truths with reasoning probing into suchness all worldly conventions will become undermined.

3') Refuting with the consequence that arising could not be negated on the ultimate level

[The commentary states:]

Why is it that when all manifest clingings to things as true existence are severed, terrified, one clings onto the conventional truth as real? If you assert "Some things of substance, which are the causes of the afflicted class and enlightened class must be made to arise," though you may say this, only the words remains. Why is this so?³⁴⁸

**Just as in the context of suchness due to some reasoning
Arising from self and arising another are untenable,
Since through them they're untenable even on the nominal level,
So by what means is your arising established?**

Just as when in the context of an analysis into suchness, because of some reasoning as mentioned earlier, the arising of phenomena such as form from self and from another become untenable, on the conventional level too because of these reasoning their arising become untenable. Therefore, by what valid cognition is your intrinsic arising established? It is not.

[The commentary explains] "Therefore, as far as arising by virtue of one's own characteristic is concerned, it does not exist on the level of both truths. This one will be compelled to, without doubt, admit against one's wish."³⁴⁹ So, as explained here, the arising that is being negated in the context of negating arising even on the conventional level by the reasoning probing into suchness is explained, in the transitional passage, to be an arising embodying [real] substance. In the summary, this has been explained as before. So it refers only to those qualified with the object of negation in terms of "arising by virtue of one's own characteristics." It does not refer at all to mere arising. On numerous occasions it has been stated that it is inappropriate to apply ultimate analysis upon the facts of conventional truth. [219]

To uphold the view that if the reasoning probing into suchness does not negate arising by virtue of one's characteristics on the conventional level, then the ultimate existence of arising too will not be negated is so because the existence by virtue of one's own characteristic in itself constitutes true existence. So, it is maintained, whether one applies the qualification "on the conventional level" or not remains the same. Given this there countless instances in the sutras and the writings of [Nāgārjuna] father and son as well as the texts of this master [Candrakīrti] where the object of negation is qualified in such terms as "by virtue of one's own characteristic," "by virtue of intrinsic nature," "by virtue of one's own essence," and so on. When negation is undertaken in such terms that [even]

³⁴⁸ MABh, p*

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p*

some Madhyamikas are taken as the object of refutation is as explained earlier. *The Clear Words* too states:

This must be accepted without any doubt. Otherwise, would not conventional truth come to possess [objective] evidence? It would then become [real] on the level of suchness; not on the conventional level.³⁵⁰

Thus when refuting the positing of conventional facts on the basis of not being satisfied with mere designation of terms and doing so with analyzing the referents of the designations [Candrakīrti] argues that in such a case they will become ultimately existent and that form and so on would not be conventional truth. So [these consequences] are levelled against someone who do not accept form and so on as ultimate existence and takes them to be conventional. Since this is not [done so] against a proponent of real entities it is extremely clear that [the opponent here] is Svatantrika-Madhyamaka. Here the master states that some assert that Noble [Nāgārjuna's] refutation of arising and so forth in the text "Not from self nor from another" and so on is a negation of arising in terms of imputation of the substantive duality of subject and object and not a negation of true existence of dependent nature. Those who interpret thus, as they do not have any proof, this cannot be established. [220] So those assert thus deserve to be disputed and examined.³⁵¹ With respect to the opponent here, although some early Tibetan thinkers claim this to be master Sthiramati and so on, there does not appear to be any such statements in their texts. As [Candrakīrti] states in his commentary on the *Four Hundred Stanzas* that master Dharmapala upholds the view of Mind Only, it would be okay to relate this to that [statement].³⁵²

In that case, how do those who interpret the meaning of the profound sutras in terms of Mind Only explain the meaning of Noble [Nāgārjuna's] texts? Although in the texts of the great ones like master Vasubandhu there are no explicit mentions of how they interpret the meaning of Nāgārjuna's texts, in works such as *Rules of Thorough Exposition* he seems to interpret, on the basis of *Sutra Unravelling the Buddha's Intention*, the perfection of wisdom sutras as interpretable. So he seems to explain [the profound sutras] similar to that sutra. It is inconceivable that [Vasubandhu/Candrakīrti] would refute Noble [Nāgārjuna's] texts; yet if he were to explain them in accordance with their literal meaning then he would not interpret the perfection of wisdom sutras literally [as well]. If, on the other hand, the literal meaning were to be explained as interpretable, one will then have to explain its meaning in terms of Mind Only. However, since those [sutras] that present all phenomena as not ultimately existent and as not existing by virtue of their own characteristics are established as per literal meaning, there is no effective objection that can injure this. Hence they cannot be explained as interpretable. Bearing this in mind, [Candrakīrti] stated "They deserve to be disputed and examined." To demonstrate that there are effective objections that undermine the opposite of literal [reading] and to show that there are countless proofs for the straightforward [reading] is

³⁵⁰ PSP, p.*

³⁵¹ This is a paraphrase of MABh, p.*

³⁵² CST, p.*

done so through proving how the meaning of the text cannot be interpreted in some other ways. Here only a brief explanation is given.

ii” Repudiation of objections raised against such refutation

If arising that exists by virtue of one’s own characteristics [221] does not exist on the level of both truths, form and so on would then become non-existent. In that case, form and so on would not be perceived by consciousness, such as that of eyes and so on. Otherwise, rabbit’s horn and so on too could be perceived by cognitions like eye consciousness. For the reasons are exactly the same in all possible manners.

To respond to this, it reads:

**It’s not that empty things like reflections and so on,
Which are contingent upon aggregation, are not unknown;
Just as with respect to empty things like reflections,
Cognitions arise with these as their aspects;
Likewise though all these things are empty,
They arise perfectly from [their causes that are] emptiness.**

Empty entities, such as mirror reflections, and so on, which includes echoes and alike, these arise in dependence upon aggregation of causes and conditions like a mirror and face and a cave and issuing of sounds. That this is so is not unknown to the world; that is this is known. While these are known to the world in dependence upon [these phenomena] such as mirror reflection, which are “empty” in that they are false, cognitions such as that of eyes arise assuming the aspects of mirror reflections and so on – that is from false reflections arise false cognitions – likewise, even though all entities are empty of existence by virtue of their own characteristics from causes that are empty of this [imputed fact] will arise effects that are empty of such fact.

Given that it is stated here that from mirror reflections visual consciousness arises, mirror reflection is a functional thing and since it is of different entity from consciousness it is an external reality. Because it is the objective condition of visual perception as well it is accepted to be a form source. One should discern the same for appearance of double-moon, appearance of falling hair, mirage and so on, as well as echoes and others alike. In that this is so, the face, double-moon, falling hair and so on resemble existence by virtue of one’s characteristics that appear to the five [sensory] cognitions where there are no immediate conditions for the senses [experience] illusion. [222] Although face and so on [as the reflection and so on] are impossible yet they appear as such resembles the fact that although existence by virtue of one’s own characteristics is impossible [things] appear as such. Since mirror reflections, echoes and so on resemble the form, sound and so on, so just as although existence of the five [sense objects] such as form by virtue of their own characteristics is not posited as external realities, yet form and so on that appear in such manner are posited as external realities, similarly, although mirror reflections and so on as being the face and so on are not posited as external realities, reflections and so on are

posited as external realities. Insofar as they are posited as external reality or not these two [i.e. forms and so on on the one hand and their reflections on the other] are equal.

The falsity of reflection in that it is empty of the face is something that is established by all the worldly people who are mature and seasoned in language yet whose mind is not turned towards any of the scriptures or reasoning that present emptiness. Therefore to assert such a realization to be a coarse form of rational cognition is incorrect. One might argue “In that case, even if this known falsity of reflection becomes established, since this does not establish it false as defined by the Middle Way school, how can the former then become an example for the latter?” The citing of mirror reflections and alike as examples in the context here is to cite [a level of] falsity already established by the worldly [perspective]. It is not an instance of taking falsity as defined by the Middle Way school which is already established. Here with respect to the reflection that appears as [the actual] face, on the level of perception, no differentiation can be drawn in anyway in terms of this part appear as the face and that part does not appear as the face. It is empty of existing as it appears with respect to all the aspects of its appearance. Nevertheless it is not a contradiction for it to arise in dependence upon its causes and conditions. It is this [fact] that is being cited as an analogy. So when blue [objects] and so on appear as existing by virtue of their own characteristics, on the part of the blue object it is perceived in terms of indistinguishability of some parts appearing as existing by virtue of their own characteristics and some other parts not. [223] Although it [the blue object] is empty of existing in the manner in which it appears in terms of all the aspects of its appearance, that it is not a contradiction for it to be produced by its causes and conditions and for it to produce its own effects is being established.

If one learns to define mirror reflection in a way whereby although it does not exist in the manner in which it is perceived with regard to all the aspects of its appearance yet this does not lead to the reflection being non-existent, with respect to the blue object too it becomes possible to define it in such a way that even though it does not exist in the manner in which it is perceived as existing by virtue of its own characteristic, the blue object still exists. Distinguishing with a refined mind “this is to be negated” and “this is not to be negated” on the basis of a reflection is imperative for finding the Middle Way view so one must not be easily contented [with respect to this analogy]. Therefore, the commentary states:

[Because of having] set forth the causes and conditions of mirror reflection that has no intrinsic existence too, what learned person would knowingly determine form, feeling and so on that abide as not different from causes and effects and are perceived to be mere existence as possessing intrinsic nature? Therefore although they are perceived as existent they do not possess intrinsic arising.³⁵³

Thus distinction between mere existence and intrinsic existence and, as arising has been stated earlier and the absence of intrinsic arising [too] has been shown, distinction between arising and intrinsic arising were explained very clearly. If these are not distinguished, so long as entities exist they become existent by virtue of their own essence and so long as

³⁵³ MABh, p. *

they do not exist by virtue of their own essence they become non-existent. In this way, one fails to transcend the two extremes of reification and denigration. Commentary on the *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

According to those who propound the entities to be real entities, so long as [the entities] are existent in that sense of real entities so long they possess their realities, however, [224] when they are devoid of their own essences at that point the entities become non-existent in all manners. They [then] resemble the horn of a donkey so they are confined to speaking of the two [extremes]. Because of this it will be difficult [for them] to accomplish all their desired wishes.³⁵⁴

Therefore being free of all extremes of existence – in that nothing exists by virtue of one's own essence – and being free of all extremes of non-existence – in that cause and effect that have no intrinsic existence can be accorded to that very thing – appear to be a distinctive feature of the interpretation of Noble [Nāgārjuna's] thought by master Buddhapaṇita and Candrakīrti. So it is extremely important to distinguish between the two forms of existence and the two forms of non-existence. Setting forth [emptiness] by means of the analogy of reflection is presented in the following in the *Meeting of Father and Son Sutra*:

Just as on a clear mirror
A reflection of a form
With no intrinsic existence appears,
Understand phenomena such as trees.³⁵⁵

With respect to how to relate the other analogies of falsehood too one should understand as [explained] before.

e” Presenting the merits of negating intrinsic arising on the level of both of the two truths

This has two parts:

i” The merit of abandoning eternalistic and nihilistic views more easily

ii” The merit of how cause and effect becomes highly tenable

The first is as follows.

**Since intrinsic nature does not exist on both levels of truth,
These [things] are neither eternal nor annihilated.**

In that all entities are, like a mirror reflection, empty of intrinsic existence, they have no existence by virtue of intrinsic nature both on the level of ultimate and conventional truths. Therefore, form and so on are neither intrinsically existing eternal nor annihilated.

³⁵⁴ CST, p. *

³⁵⁵ Sutra *

Annihilation here refers to the sense explained in the context where the cessation of seed is stated to be not presented at the time of the sprout.³⁵⁶ *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

As they say what was before does not exist,
One therefore falls into annihilationism.³⁵⁷

Thus because one has accepted the entities as intrinsic existence so even if one accepts a thing that existed before as not present later or as an impermanent that has ceased, [225] this constitutes an annihilationist view. So if one accepts the entities as intrinsic existence whatever one may hold them to be – whether permanent or impermanent – , [Nḡgṛjuna] has stated, this is a view that falls into either of two extremes of eternalism or nihilism. Here the commentary states that the *Fundamental Wisdom* explains that just as the Teacher manifests an emanation who in turn manifests another emanation, the agent, the object, and the act done too are similar to these creations. Thus he has shown how from no intrinsic existence [things that are] not intrinsic existence arise.³⁵⁸ This presents how because all functions are posited upon [phenomena] with no intrinsic existence there is no [case of falling into a] nihilistic view.

Here if existence by virtue of one's own characteristic is not negated on the conventional level, one will fail to realize the extremely subtle selflessness. So it becomes difficult to ensure that the very subtle eternalistic and nihilistic views do not arise within one's mind. Therefore abandonment of all eternalistic and nihilistic views without residue is the merit of negating that object of negation on the conventional level. If this is negated as existing on the conventional level not only will one not fall into the eternalistic and nihilistic views with reference to the ultimate truth, one will not be soiled by the stains of eternalistic and nihilistic views with reference to conventional truth as well. Thus there is the merit of abandoning the eternalistic and nihilistic views more easily.

ii” The merit of how cause and effect becomes highly tenable

This has three parts:

- 1’) Showing how it is not necessary to accept foundational consciousness by someone who do not accept intrinsic existence
- 2’) Illustrating an analogy on how effects come into being from cessation of acts
- 3’) Repudiation of objections against such a demonstration

The first has three parts:

- a’) Explaining the transitional section
- b’) Explaining the word-meaning of the root text
- c’) Discussing the side issues arising from that [root text]

³⁵⁶ This is a reference to MA, 6:* Tsongkhapa's exposition of this section can be found at p.* of our volume.

³⁵⁷ MMK, 15:11.

³⁵⁸ MABh, p.*

[The commentary states:]

Thus given that intrinsic nature does not exist on the level of both truths one will cast away to a distant the eternalistic and nihilistic views. Not only that, although it has been a long while since the karma are accrued [226] it is tenable that these karma connect to their effects even without foundational consciousness, without mental continuum, without “non-wasting” [property], or without obtainment.³⁵⁹

Thus to the standpoint that has no intrinsic existence, it is demonstrated that only is there the merit of casting far away the eternalistic and nihilistic views there is also the merit of utter tenability of the relation between karma and its effects even without subscribing to foundational consciousness and alike.

On the basis of this unique mode of interpreting the texts of Noble [Nḡḡrjuna] in terms of how even though there is not even an atom with intrinsic existence one can still accord all transactions such as act and its agent, there emerges many perfectly correct tenets that remain unique in comparison to other commentary authors. What are those? Here, for the time being, if one were to mention the principal ones, there are the following. There are the three rejections – (1) rejection of foundational consciousness that is of different entity from the six collections [of consciousness], (2) a unique method of refuting self-cognizing awareness, and (3) the engendering of the view of suchness in another person through autonomous syllogism. (4) Just as consciousness is accepted so must one accept external reality, (5) that realization of selflessness of phenomena exists even for disciple and self-enlightened ones, (6) positing the apprehension of self-existence of phenomena as an affliction, (7) that cessation [of entities] is a functional thing, and (8) because of this reason there exists a unique way of positing the three times.

Of these the first is presented here in the present section, while how non-acceptance of self-cognizing awareness is rooted in the rejection of intrinsic existence shall be explained later [in the text]. As for how non-acceptance of autonomous [reasoning] is rooted in that [rejection] has been explained extensively elsewhere;³⁶⁰ a brief explanation will be provided here as well. How acceptance of external reality is due to this [rejection] shall be explained later. [227] That the fifth also is due to this [rejection] is that, just as Buddhapaṇita explains the selfhood that is rejected in the Disciple’s scriptural basket with the statement “All phenomena are devoid of self-existence” in terms of existence by virtue of an essence, here too this is accepted similarly. That, in turn, refers to a comprehensive selflessness. Therefore, selflessness in the sense of comprehensive characteristics must be understood in terms of the person’s non-existence by virtue of its own essence. And to realize that as it is it is necessary to realize selflessness of phenomena exactly as it is. This being so, one must accept apprehension of self-existence

³⁵⁹ MABh, p.*

³⁶⁰ This is an allusion to Tsongkhapa’s own discussion of the question in other works, especially the special insight section of his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path of Enlightenment* (see English translation, volume III, pp.*) and *Essence of Eloquence*, pp.* (Thurman, pp.*).

of phenomena as an affliction thus numbers of differences [between this tradition and others] emerge, such as two views – subtle and coarser - on the identification of the afflictions, two views on whether or not the path of the sixteen characteristics, such as impermanence, alone leads for freedom, as well as the divergent [position] on from what point one [begins to] eliminate obscuration to knowledge and so on.

[Question:] Both Madhyamikas must accept the existence of a common locus between someone who has entered the great vehicle from the start and has established well the view of suchness and [later] falls into the disciple or self-enlightened one's path. In such a case one will have to accept that through meditation on selflessness of phenomena [his realization] becomes a direct experience and that what he has seen becomes gains [greater] familiarity. If so, one will also have to admit that through this path the acquired levels of grasping at self-existence of phenomena are eliminated from the path of seeing and the innate self-grasping from his path of meditation. So, even according to the Middle Way tradition that accepts the entities to exist by virtue of their own characteristics, does one accept twofold distinction within the grasping at self-existence of phenomena – one that is affliction and one that is not an affliction?

[Response:] Although there does not appear to be clear explanations of this point, these Svatantrika-Madhyamikas will have to maintain that on the basis of practicing those disciple and self-enlightened one's paths, although temporary overcoming of manifest levels of grasping at self-existence of phenomena may occur, [228] however, without the complement of gathering limitless collections [of merit] it is not possible to have the seed of any of the two self-grasping to be eliminated. So although it is possible to have disciples and self-enlightened ones who have temporarily overcome manifest levels of obscuration of knowledge, they will have say that it is impossible for them to have its seed eliminated.

In the view of this master, however, the grasping at self-existence of phenomena is an affliction. So there is no need for the complementary factor of limitless collection [of merit] in order to eliminate it. To purify the obscuration to knowledge in the form of residual dispositions of dualistic illusions, however, he maintains that this cannot be achieved without such a complement. Since to have obtained understanding of these points as clarified above seems to be critical, I have explained them here.

b') Explaining the word-meaning of the root text

This is as follows.

**Because it does not cease intrinsically,
So without foundational consciousness though it is capable;
So even though it has been long since the act has ceased
Know that the effect comes into being perfectly.**

[Question:] How is it that in the standpoint that has no intrinsic existence, even though foundational consciousness and so on are not accepted, the connection between karma and its effects remains tenable?

[Response:] Although all Buddhist schools, both higher and lower, accept that even from virtuous and non-virtuous karma where a long period of time has lapsed between the acts and their results effects, such as happiness and suffering originate. Here, if the action remains present up to the point immediately preceding the giving forth of the effect it becomes permanent. Since a permanent is incapable of effecting a function the connectedness of effects originating from the acts become untenable. If, on the other hand, the act ceases in the next moment following its execution, that act remains non-existent from that point up to the immediately preceding moment before the issuing forth of the effect. Since the cessation of action does not exist as an entity how can effects arise from the karma?

Responding to this (1) some conceive of foundational consciousness in order for the karmic act, which becomes ceased in the second moment to implant the potency of the karmic act when it is at the point of cessation. (2) Some accept something called “non-corrosion” that is analogous to a guarantee for a loan like a promissory note, [229] which [they claim] is different from the karmic act – something that is an **abstract compositional factor**. (3) Some conceive what is called “obtainment,” something that is of different reality from the karmic act and is an abstract compositional factor. (4) Others conceive of the continuum of consciousness that has been impinged with the residual disposition of the karmic act. Therefore, they uphold, although the act has ceased there is no contradiction in that after a long period of time it gives forth its effects. Since the karmic act implants its imprints upon foundational consciousness that imprint is an effect of the act and through successive continuity of its kind eventually it gives forth its effect. So they assert that [the effect] originate from through the continuity of the initial karmic act. In a similar way, one should understand [the explanation of the mechanism] of the other three [postulations] as well.

Of these the first is the standpoint of some Mind Only proponents. Avalokitavrata explains that the second refers to Vaibhaṣika; it is other than Kaṣmiri Vaibhaṣika.³⁶¹ The third too is a subdivision of the Vaibhaṣika school. As to the fourth, although there is explicit identification of it, if one were to compare it against the ninth commentary of *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*, this appears to be the view of Sautrantika and Kaṣmiri Vaibhaṣika.³⁶² Although the Kaṣmiri [Vaibhaṣika] accepts obtainment, they do not accept the notion that what is to be obtained, namely the two karmic acts, engender obtainment. Here, however, it is someone who does accept this. This is the significance of the expression “according to whom.”³⁶³

According to Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka for whom the karmic act did not arise by virtue of its own essential reality, in that the karmic act does not intrinsically cease so there is no

³⁶¹ Tengyur, *

³⁶² AKBh, p. *

³⁶³ MABh, p. *

contradiction in effects originating from this non intrinsic ceasing. Therefore, even without subscribing to foundational consciousness the effects are capable of originating from the karmic acts. So one should know that within the mental continuum of the sentient beings, even after a lapse of such a long time such as many eons following the cessation of the two acts that were committed, [230] effects come from the karmic acts perfectly, that is to say the effects come about inviolably from their causes. This being so in this standpoint [the causal] relation between karma and its effects remain utterly tenable.

The meaning of these lines is that all the four who have responded to the objection raised earlier adhere to [the notion] that karmic act possesses arising and ceasing that exist by virtue of its own characteristics and also that, following the execution of the act, their cessation too exists by virtue of intrinsic nature. With respect to that [issue] it will be inappropriate for this master [Candrakīrti] to respond by stating that although [the karmic act] ceases in such manner because we accept foundational consciousness there is no problem. Because he negates this in terms of asserting that there are no arising and ceasing of karmic acts in a manner of possessing intrinsic existence. To demonstrate this way of responding [to the objection] is the position of Noble [Nāgārjuna] as well, he cites the following:

Since the act has no arising,
Likewise no intrinsic existence,
So as it is unborn,
It therefore does become wasted.³⁶⁴

The meaning here is this. Because there is no intrinsically existing karmic act there is no arising by virtue of one's own essential reality. Therefore, since it is not possible for the karmic act to cease intrinsically, it is inappropriate to hold that cessation, following the execution of the act, as intrinsically existent and conceive of it becoming unwasted.

Although this reasoning is mentioned in the context of refuting the non-corrosion [notion], there is no difference at all with respect to refuting the other three as well. Because the grounds are exactly the same in all possible manners. Again, [Candrakīrti] cites the following sutra:

The lifespan of a human is hundred years;
One can say we will live up to that.
There is heaping together of years;
What is established too is like that.

Whatever one speaks of no exhaustion,
Or what one speaks of exhaustion of karma,
In the mode of emptiness there is no exhaustion;
In a conventional mode exhaustion is taught.³⁶⁵ [231]

³⁶⁴ MMK, *

³⁶⁵ MABh, p.*

This is a scriptural source to [show] that there is no intrinsically existing exhaustion or cessation and that these two are posited on the strength of conventions. In Naktsō's translation, the following is found:

Just as heaping together of years
Does not exist so likewise you should view
The perfect aggregation [of years] too.³⁶⁶

These are explained on the basis of applying the qualification to the object of negation such as “does not cease that is by virtue of intrinsic nature.”³⁶⁷

c') Discussing the side issues arising from that [root text]

This has two parts:

- i') How no intrinsic existence of cessation becomes a reason for rejecting foundational consciousness
- ii') Even though foundational consciousness is rejected the basis for the impringement of dispositions is posited

[Objection:] Although there may be no intrinsically existing cessation even in your own system you speak of “Sometimes the karmic acts cease ..” [Nḡḡrjuna] also states “Having ceased and having no intrinsic existence,” so like the line “On conventional exhaustion has been taught,” you will have to admit that following the execution of the act the act [itself] ceases. At that point since cessation does not exist as a functional thing, and if you do not accept foundational consciousness and alike for the basis of the connection between karmic act and its effects, then the objection that the origination of effects after a long lapse of time following the execution of the karmic act is untenable still stands and your previous responses remain inadequate.

[Response:] The very reason presented in the lines “Because it does not cease intrinsically/So ...”³⁶⁸ implies that it is from the cessation of the cessation of karmic acts that the effects come into being so no separate response is presented. This due to the fact that for those positions that assert the entities to be intrinsic existence the cessation cannot be a functional entity while for the Middle Way the cessation is established as a functional entity. In the case of the first standpoint, when the sprout, for example, ceases all functional entities that are part of the sprout have undone [232] and no other entity, such as a vase, is obtained [in its aftermath]. So they maintain that cessation to be never a functional entity. Be it an individual sources such as the blue [color] or an entity that is composed of its parts, such as a vase, none of these can be taken as an illustration of this cessation. Therefore, they think, it is not a functional entity.

³⁶⁶ *

³⁶⁷ MA, 6:*

³⁶⁸ MA, 6:* For Tsongkhapa's own explanation of these lines, see p.* of our volume.

In the second standpoint, for example, although none of the five aggregates of Upagupta, both individually or collectively, or something that is different entity from them can be posited as the identity of Upagupta nor can Upagupta be defined as any of these three, still it is not a contradiction [to assert] that what is designated as Upagupta on the basis of his aggregates is a functional entity. In the case of cessation too, although none among the entity that will come to cease or any other entity that shares its class can be taken as its identity, because it arises in dependence upon the entity that will come to cease it is a functional entity. To prove this both scriptural citation and reasoning were prented in the *Clear Words*. For the first, the *Ten Levels Sutra* states “Due to birth as the condition aging and death [ensue].”³⁶⁹ Death is the dismantling of that sentient being and this is explained as being engendered by the birth. Again [*Clear Words*] states:

Dying consists of two activities: It involves the disintegration of conditioning [towards living] as well as it brings forth the cause of ensuring the continuity of total unknowing.³⁷⁰

So it explains that dying performs two activities: It makes death a caused event and that death also engenders ignorance as well. Therefore, cessation has a cause that produces it and also cessation has the capacity to produce effects. Although this [statement] pertains to cessation in terms of a continuum [of an entity], this is true also of the cessation in terms of the first moment ceasing at the time of the second moment. So this [citation] also indicates how the first moment is the cause of its cessation at the time of the second moment. [233] Therefore, between the following – the birth and death of a sentient being, not persisting at the time of the second moment and not having persisted at the time of the second moment – insofar as whether they are posited as functional entity or not and whether they are produced by cause or not, they equal in all respects. In view of this, the *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

Entity and non-entity are conditioned things.³⁷¹

And *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* states:

The tranquility derived from extinction of cause,
This is understood to be a cessation;³⁷²

Thus entities, such as a sprout, and its cessation that its absence as an entity are both described as conditioned things and the exhaustion of causes, such as the oil, is described as the cause for the exhaustion/extinction of the effect, such as an oil lamp. Therefore one should accept this without doubt to be the understanding of Noble [Nṛgaṛjuna].

Given that the cessation of the first moment at the time of the second moment must be cognized on the basis of an explicit elimination of the object of negation, it is a negation

³⁶⁹ *Ten Levels Sutra*, Tengyur, p.* Cited in *Clear Words*, chapter 7.

³⁷⁰ PSP, p.*

³⁷¹ MMK, 25:13.

³⁷² *Sixty Stanzas*, 20 ab.

and since it is not a non-implicative negation it is an implicative negation. This is because it is not simply an elimination of the entity that has ceased, it has implied an entity that is the elimination of that [entity]. As for remaining part of the extensive proofs [of cessation of entities as a functional entity] you should learn these from my commentary to the *Fundamental Wisdom*.³⁷³ This represents a subtle and highly important form of reasoning of this system [of Candrakīrti].

ii') Even though foundational consciousness is rejected the basis for the imprinting of dispositions is posited

[Question:] Even though you do not accept foundational consciousness you will have to maintain that virtuous and nonvirtuous dispositions are imprinted and that through the maturation of these dispositions the effects come into being. For example, the commentary to *Entering the Middle Way* states, "From the thorough maturation of the dispositions placed in the beginningless cycle of existence towards real entities they cling at entities as real..."³⁷⁴ Many other similar statements can be found as well. Since this is untenable without there being a basis for the dispositions to be imprinted, so what is that basis?

[Response:] Just as according to those who accept foundational consciousness they assert the foundational consciousness, which is the basis upon which the afflicted mind directs the sense "I am," [234] similarly, this system too holds the objective focus of that innate thought that arises simply as sense "I am."

In that case, how is that in the commentary to *Entering the Middle Way* the continuity of mind is described as the basis of the residual dispositions?³⁷⁵ Since the mere "I" is the continuum designated upon the mind, that is the consciousness, it is referred to as the continuum of the mind as well. If the [subsequent stages] the mind's own type is referred to as its continuum, this too becomes an occasional basis to imprint the residual dispositions. With respect to the nature of ignorance's dispositions, the commentary to *Entering the Middle Way* states:

That which spreads over the mental continuum and imprings it and follows after it, this is a residual disposition. The final depth of the afflictions, its habituation, its root and residual dispositions, these are synonyms. This is something that, even though they may have eliminated the afflictions through the uncontaminated path, the disciples and the self-enlightened are not capable of eliminating. For example, even though one may have removed the sesame oil or the flower, because the vase or the clothe have come into contact with them, their subtle qualities can still be perceived.³⁷⁶

³⁷³ See pp. * of the English translation.

³⁷⁴ MABh, p. *

³⁷⁵ MABh, p. *

³⁷⁶ MABh, p. *

With respect to other dispositions, such as those of virtue and nonvirtue, one should extend appropriately how there are these two types of basis.

One might have the following thought: “In that case, although at the time of the uninterrupted stage of the path of seeing its object of elimination, which are the objects of elimination of the path of seeing, are not present, the propensities of the object of elimination of the path of meditation must exist. However, at that point since the mental consciousness is uncontaminated and untainted by the residual dispositions of dualistic illusions, it is not logical for that dispositions to abide within that reality [of the uncontaminated mind]. Since sensory consciousness does not exist as its support nor is it appropriate for the physical body to be its support. Furthermore, since you reject foundational consciousness, so there will be no support for it [the propensities of the object elimination of the path of meditation].”[235]

There is no problem because at that time a mere “I” is the support of the propensities of the object of elimination of meditation. Extend this to other antidotes and their corresponding object of elimination. If one understands the unique way in which this system defines the person, arguments such as the following also do not appear to pose any harm: “When an instance of uncontaminated mind that belongs to the level of nothingness [formless realm] manifests in the mental continuum of a Noble One who is born in the peak-of-existence realm, the being that belongs to both the grounds of peak-of-existence and nothingness will become undone. This is because the site of that uncontaminated mind cannot be either of the two beings nor can it be the being who has attained nirvaṇa.”

Because even though none of the minds – contaminated or uncontaminate – is posited as the identity of the person, it is still admissible to posit the person. The standpoint of the opponent is to adhere to the view that the nature of the person of those who have not entered the path and those on the learner’s stage is that of a neutral non-obscurating phenomena.

As for these responses, how can someone like me speak independently on matters of these great systems. Nevertheless, I have spoken on these on the basis of the traditions of the great charioteers who know how to posit the thought of savior Nāgārjuna as it is in its completeness. Judging on the basis of these [responses] it seems that the remaining arguments that [aim to] prove foundational consciousness do not injure this system. Those who possess intelligence that is great, refined and sharp should enquire further.

2’) Illustrating an analogy on how effects come into being from cessation of acts

To illustrate the fact that has been explained earlier, that is how effects originate from the cessation of the karmic acts, by means of an analogy, it reads: [236]

**Having seen objects perceived in a dream,
Lust is experienced by a fool even when awoken;
Likewise from acts that have ceased and**

Has no intrinsic existence as well effects will arise.

Having seen objects such as a beautiful woman in a dream, then even after waking up – that is even when one is awake – the foolish person experiences intense lust by focusing on someone who has ceased at present and is no more. Similarly, from the cessation of a karmic act that has no intrinsic existence too there exists the origination of the effects of karmic acts. Thus the origination of effects from cessation is explained.

To substantiate this, the following is cited from *Sutra of Transferring to Another Existence*:

O great king, it is thus. For example, a man experiences a dream wherein he is making love to a beautiful woman of the region. After waking from that dream if he were to [continue to] think of that beautiful woman, O great king, what would you think of this? Is this person who, having dreamed of making love to a beautiful woman of the region, continues to think of that beautiful woman after having woken from his sleep someone that shares the nature of a learned person?

The king replied: Blessed One, this is not so. Why is this so? For if the beautiful woman of his dream does not exist and she cannot be observed, how can there be the experiencing of her? Thus such a man will be someone who is depraved and wearied.³⁷⁷

This citation presents the analogy. Extending this to the context, the following is cited:

O great king, likewise, the childish beings on the ordinary stage who lack learning too, having seen the forms with their eyes, manifestly cling at the forms that bring pleasure to their mind. Clinging thus then engender attachment. Being attached, they create [acts] through their body, speech and mind that derive from attachment, from aversion, and from delusion. [237] Once manifestly created, these acts come to cease. When they have ceased, they do not reside in the east with a support. ... They do not reside in the cardinal and intermediate directions.³⁷⁸

“Not possessing learning” refers to not having the realization of suchness on the basis of having heard teaching of suchness. “Manifest clinging” refers to clinging to self-existence. The three acts derived from attachment refer to both virtuous and non-virtuous karmic acts, while the karmic acts derived from aversion refer to non-virtuous acts; with respect to karmic acts derived from delusion too there are both acts accumulated. The cessation of the act immediately following its execution is on the conventional level, while the remaining part negates the cessation as existing by virtue of an essence. Then [the commentary] states:

³⁷⁷ Srid pa 'pho ba'I mdo, Kangyur, p.*

³⁷⁸ Srid pa 'pho ba'I mdo, Kangyur, p.*

Then at another time when one approaches closer to the time of death, when the last moment of consciousness comes to an end as a result of the exhaustion of the propulsion of life belonging to the same status, thus, like the mind of a person who wakes up from his sleep turning towards the woman of that region, his mind shall turn towards that karmic act.³⁷⁹

Having exhausted the karma for sustaining the “same status,” which refers to [continuation of] the aggregates of the same kind, and when the last moment of the consciousness of this present life comes to an end, like the lustful who thinks of his dream woman and whose mind turns towards her, at the point of death one’s mind turn towards the karma whose potency is being reactivated and is likely mature in the next life. This is, however, not an instance of remembering.

[Candrakīrti] cites “Thus the last moment of the consciousness comes to an end and the first moment of consciousness that is part of the rebirth, if one were to be born among the celestial beings, ... Or, if one may be born among the hungry ghosts.”³⁸⁰ He then states “The cessation of the last moment belongs to this life. With respect to the emergence of the first moment of consciousness that is part of the rebirth [238] it reads ‘Among the celestial beings’ and so on.”³⁸¹ Since the intermediate state of existence is not part of the six realms the reference here is to the consciousness of existence as rebirth. Although between birth and death there is intermediate existence, there seem to be numerous occasions where it is not mentioned. This is because the aim here is to set forth the connection between karma and its effects primarily within the framework of birth and death.

Next [the sutra reads]:

The instance the first moment of consciousness ceases the continuity of the mind will emerge that shares the same kind of status with [the existence] wherein it is evident that the fruitional effect [of the karma] will be experienced. O great king, here there is no phenomena that is transferred from this world to the next world yet there is transition of death and what manifests as rebirth. O great king, that which constitutes the cessation of the final moment of consciousness this is called transition of death. That which constitutes the emergence of the first moment of consciousness this is called birth. O great king, when the final moment of consciousness ceases it does not go anywhere. When the consciousness that is part of the rebirth emerges it does come from anywhere. Why is this so? Because they are devoid of intrinsic existence. O great king, the final moment of consciousness is empty of final moment of consciousness. Birth is empty of birth; the first moment of consciousness is empty of first moment of consciousness. The birth is empty of birth yet the karmic acts appear to be non-corroding.³⁸²

³⁷⁹ MABh, p.*

³⁸⁰ Srid pa 'pho ba'I mdo, p.*

³⁸¹ MABh, p.*

³⁸² Srid pa 'pho ba'I mdo, Kangur, p.* Cited in MABh, p.*

So prior to connecting with existence as rebirth, because of experiencing happiness or suffering as a result of past karma, the continuity of consciousness that undergoes that experience emerges from the first moment of the consciousness of rebirth. Transition into death and rebirth exist on the conventional level; that they not exist on the ultimate level its reason “because they are devoid of intrinsic existence” qualifies the object of negation. [239] So one should extend this to the statements on how consciousness and so on are empty of themselves. Because of making such statements there is the fear that one might hold karma and its effects to be nonexistent therefore the karmic acts are described as non-corroding.

3’) Repudiation of objections against such a demonstration

This has two parts:

- a’) Repudiation of the objection that fruitional effects will be infinite
- b’) Repudiation of the objection that one contradicts the scriptures that present foundational consciousness

[Objection:] If you assert that from the karmic acts that have no intrinsic arising and do not possess intrinsic exhaustion fruitional effects emerge, in that case, even from those karma whose effects have already fruited fruitional effects can emerge. Hence there will be the fault of infinite regress. [In response] it reads:

**Just as though they are equal in having no objects,
Those with a cataract perceive falling hairs,
But not in the form of other things;
Likewise know that [acts] ripen and reripen from these.**

Just as, that is for example, while the nonexistence of the objects remain equal those with cataracts see aspects such as falling hair that do not exist, but do not see aspects such as the horn of a donkey or a son of a barren woman, likewise, while they are equal in that the karmic act do not exist by virtue of intrinsic nature, know that ripening occurs to those that are not already fruited and not from those that are already fruited.

From this analogy not only can it be established that effects definitely ensue from the karmic acts, that from virtuous and nonvirtuous acts their effects of desirable or undesirable [outcomes] are also individually determined as well. This is explained in the following:

**Therefore unwholesome fruits [come from] dark acts;
One sees wholesome fruits from virtuous [acts];
Those with the mind devoid of virtue and non-virtue become free;
So thinking of karma and its effects has been discouraged as well.**

Because there is **defined certainty** (*nges pa*) those with cataracts see falling hair and so on but not the horn of a donkey and so on, so desirable fruitional effects do not emerge from

nonvirtue and undesirable fruitional effects from virtue. Therefore, one sees that the unwholesome fruitional effects, that is undesirable [effects], emerge from negative karma, while wholesome fruitional effects, that is desirable [effects] emerge from virtue. And those who do not possess the thoughts of virtue and nonvirtue, [230] that is those who realize [karma and its effects] as non-objectified and not existing by means of intrinsic nature will become free from the cycle of existence. Therefore, thinking that those ordinary beings who [strive to] determine through refined analysis by means of the law of evidence that it is from this specific karma this specific effect emerged may come to denigrate karma and its effects thus leading to destruction of conventional truth, the Buddhas stated that the fruitional effects of karma are inconceivable. Thus they discourage thinking or analysis pertaining to karma and their effects.

One should appreciate that in this text numerous efforts are made to engender conviction in karma and its effects from all possible avenues because [Candrakīrti] fears that through numerous ways [of reasoning] such as the above there is the danger of losing one's conviction in karma and its effects. Also, on the basis of making the view of emptiness too as a complement that stabilizes this conviction, strive to ensure that today we must not return empty handed after having travelled to the land of precious jewels.

b') Repudiation of the objection that one contradicts the scriptures that present foundational consciousness

This has three parts:

- i') The actual meaning of the words resolving contradiction with scriptures
- ii') The question of whether or not foundational consciousness that is of different entity from mental consciousness has been explained
- iii') Citing the analogy for teaching this for a purpose

[Question:] If, even without foundational consciousness, the [causal] connection between karma and its effects can be posited, in that case, what has been taught in *Descent into Laṅkā* and so on, which includes *Sūtra Unravelling the Intention* and a Mahāyāna Abhidharma sūtra – namely, that which is referred to as “foundational consciousness,” which is described as the basis for the potency for all phenomenal entities that [retains] all the seeds, like waves emerging from the ocean it is the cause of all outer and inner entities – is it the case such presentation has never been made?

[Response:] I am not saying that this is so. [241] Yes, for the benefit of those who can be tamed through teaching foundational consciousness it has been taught that it does exist. Since this indicates that it is due to a purpose that foundational consciousness is taught for the sake of trainees, in one's own standpoint this is revealed to be an intentional [teaching]. As for the basis of intention in dependence upon which it was taught, one should recognize that intending solely of emptiness in terms of emptiness of intrinsic existence the term foundational consciousness has been used to indicate this. The reason why it is referred to as foundation-of-all is because that nature permeates all entities. Because of a purpose not only has foundational consciousness been taught, person is

taught as possessing substantial reality. Because those who can be tamed by it they are being sustained through teaching that the person has possesses substantial existence. For example, there is the following statement:

O monks, the five aggregates are the burden; that which carries them is the person.³⁸³

In response to those who hold the person to be substantially real, instead of teaching it to be nonexistent, [the Buddha] taught the existence a person who is the carrier of the burden. Therefore, although term is not explicitly present the reference here is to substantial real [person]. Again to some trainees the mere aggregates with no substantially real person has been taught. [For example one reads in the sutra:]

Whether one calls it the mind, or the mental faculty, or consciousness, it is for a long period of time thoroughly imprinted with faith, ethical discipline and so on and when it advances further, in the next life, one will go to the higher realms.³⁸⁴

Those who grasp at the process of journeying to the higher realms and freedom of enlightenment as true existence and wonder how much should I commit to, without negating the object of their clinging to true existence, the aggregates alone have been taught. So, by implication, it is the truly existing aggregates that are taught [in this citation]. [212] All of these were taught owing to [specific] purposes. For what kind of trainees is [foundational consciousness] taught here? To present the response, it reads:

**“Foundational consciousness exists and the person exists;”
“It is these aggregates that exist alone;”
That which state these are for the benefit of
Those who cannot cognize the highly profound truth.**

The teachings that there is foundational consciousness, the person itself exists substantially, and that these aggregates alone are, that is to say they are truly existent, these were, as explained before, taught for the sake of those trainees who for the time being will not know or realize the meaning of the profound teaching. Some trainees who, being habituated to extreme views for a long period of time, are incapable of enter the profound reality. Yet, as the *Precious Garland* states in the following

“I do not exist!” “I shall not be!”
“Mine do not exist!” “They shall not be!”
Thus the childish will be terrified.³⁸⁵

there are those whom when ultimate reality is revealed first they become terrified and may think of the Buddha’s teaching as an abyss. In doing so they will turn away from the teaching and will not enter it so [such teaching] will fail to accomplish great purposes. To those, by not teaching the profound final point right at the beginning but teaching

³⁸³ Cited in MABh, p.* See MMK and AKBh, chapter 9, as well.

³⁸⁴ Cited in MABh, p.*

³⁸⁵ RV, *

foundational consciousness and true existence of the aggregates, on this basis the extreme positions are dispelled and will thus lead to greater purposes. Later those who come to know the meaning of the scriptures will abandon their adherence to the existence of foundational consciousness and so on. Therefore in teaching such things only merits can emerge so this is not a flaw. Understanding such to be the sequence, the *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

He who likes whatever [teachings],
He should partake in that first;
He who comes to be damaged,
Certainly he is not a vessel for sublime dharma.³⁸⁶

To those foundational consciousness that is of different entity from the sixfold collection [of consciousness] must be taught, [243] external reality needs to be negated. So they are suitable vessel for [the teaching of] suchness in terms of the emptiness of subject-object as different substances. Given that they do not know how to posit [causal] connection between karma and its effect without accepting foundational consciousness, this is taught for those who will understand the highly profound truth.

ii') The question of whether or not foundational consciousness that is of different entity from mental consciousness has been explained

In many scriptures, such as *Hundred Thousand Lines on Perfection of Wisdom*, when enumerating consciousness, six collections of consciousness is mentioned thus there are many sutras that do not mention more than this [sixfold collection]. So just as in the sutras there are two types those that posit foundational consciousness and those that do not, similarly, when the meaning of these [sutras] are expounded by Maitreya, in his *Discrimination of the Middle from the Extremes*, *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* and *Clear Differentiations of Ultimate Reality* he presents the standpoint that accepts foundational consciousness and the absence of external reality; while in his *Ornament of Clear Realization* and *Sublime Continuum* he presents the standpoint that does not posit foundational consciousness and does not reject external reality. The great master Asa°ga too did not interpret the intention of *Sublime Continuum* in terms of Mind Only at all; rather, he expounded it in terms of the Middle Way standpoint. The scriptural citation that was quoted in *A Summary of the Great Vehicle* to prove foundational consciousness is treated in the following in [Asa°ga's] commentary on the "*Sublime Continuum*:"

Although the element of Tat°gatha, which constitutes an essence, is present within the sentient beings, these sentient beings do not recognize this, so it is taught. For example, it is stated:

This element that is since beginningless time
Is the site of all phenomena;
Due to its presence all sentient beings
As well as nirva°a are obtained.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁶ CS, *

Thus it was cited as a proof of the presence of Buddha-nature in the form of ultimate reality in the sentient beings. Therefore, this master is in accord with explaining emptiness as the basis of intention for teaching foundational consciousness. [244] So he accepts that foundational consciousness that is of different entity from the sixfold collection [of consciousness] was taught for the benefit of some trainees due to specific purpose.

In that case, how would one interpret the following in *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* that describes foundational consciousness as retaining cyclic existence?

By being close to a loadstone
An iron object swiftly moves forward;
It possesses no mind [of its own],
Yet it appears as if it does.

Likewise the foundational consciousness too
Appears to be real though it is false;
In this way it moves to and fro
And retains [the three realms of] existence.³⁸⁸

This teaching on Mind Only whereby external reality separate from the mind is rejected while intrinsic existence of the mind alone is not negated is for the sake of the childish to help overcome their fear against that revelation that everything is empty. It is, therefore, not the definitive truth. So when an intrinsically real purity of the mind that has undergone transformation of its state is being affirmed as the sphere of experience of [a yogi's] own subjective experience, a notion asserted by Yogacāra, was refuted, an objection remain implicit that if there is no truly existing mind coming from a prior world to this and departing from this to the next would not be tenable. In response to this, it was demonstrated, although metal and wooden objects do not possess mind they move as if they do, similarly, although foundational consciousness does not have true existence it appears to possess motility of going and coming. So this does not indicate that [Nāgārjuna] accepts foundational consciousness that exists by virtue of its own characteristics as described in some other texts.

Although he does not accept foundational consciousness that exists by virtue of its own characteristics, [245] one might wonder, if he accepts a illusion-like [consciousness] that is separate from the sixfold collection, which possesses all the seeds of afflicted phenomena as well as the enlightened class of phenomena. If one accepts this kind of foundational consciousness, one will have admit that it is merely from the ripening of the dispositions in foundational consciousness that forms, sounds and so on appear and that there is no external reality. For instance, the same text [*Commentary on the Awakening Mind*] states:

³⁸⁷ rgyud bla'i rnam bshad, Tengyur, p*

³⁸⁸ Bodhicittavivara'a, 34-35. Tengyur, *

The cognizant perceives the cognizable;
Without the cognizable there is no cognition;
Therefore why do you not admit
That neither object nor subject exists [at all]?³⁸⁹

Thus insofar as their existence or nonexistence is concerned the outer, the object of knowledge, and the inner, the cognition, are both equal. So if one does not exist, it has been stated, the other will not exist either. This is to be understood in the context of this text as indicating that both objects and cognition are exactly equal in being nonexistent on the ultimate level and exactly equal in being existent on the conventional level. So there is no difference between this and the statement that it is incorrect to discriminate between these two on the level of either of the two truths. Therefore the existence of consciousness without external reality is not the standpoint of master [Nḡgṛjuna].

Therefore, given he does not accept foundational consciousness that is separate from mental consciousness, what is referred to as “foundation” [here in Nḡgṛjuna’s text] is this. In general he posits the mere luminosity of the mind as foundation and in particular it refers to a mental consciousness. Because this is in the context of [demonstrating] how transactions of activity remain tenable for a mind that has no true existence in response to [objection against] negating intrinsic existence of the mind in general. Furthermore, the mind that seizes birth within cyclic existence is the mental consciousness. Also, the mental consciousness is the foundation of all classes of phenomena both the afflicted and the enlightened.

In *Essence of the Middle Way* too foundational consciousness has been refuted; since master Jñāgṛbha accepts external reality, he too rejects foundational consciousness. Within the Mind Only who rejects external reality too there seem to be two camps, one that accepts foundational consciousness and another that does not. Even master KḡmalaĀīla, who does not accept external reality, states that it is “mental cognition alone [246] that possesses the potency to connect with other lives.”³⁹⁰ He then cites the following from *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*:

When severed, reconnecting, freed from attachment,
When undermined, transiting through death, a birth –
This is mental consciousness we maintain.³⁹¹

So it is clear that the great master /antarakṛita too does not accept foundational consciousness. This is true of Abhyḡkara as well.

With regard to what is mentioned as “foundation” in other scriptures of Mahḡyḡna too, apart from its name there does not appear to clear identification of this. However, if one analyzes the meaning it appears that there is never an acceptance of something that is separate from the sixfold collection. Such traditions appear to belong to the standpoint

³⁸⁹ *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, 39. Tengyur, dbu ma, *

³⁹⁰ *Tattvasaḡgrahapañjika*, ?*

³⁹¹ AK, *

that accepts external reality so it is mental consciousness that is labelled as such. Although these points need to be set forth extensively for fear of length I have not written here.

iii') Citing the analogy for teaching this for a purpose

This is as follows.

**Though free of egoistic views the Buddhas display
[Acts of] uttering “I” and “mine,”
Likewise though things do not exist intrinsically,
Provisionally, he taught that they do exist [as such].**

In order to help trainees enter [the path] not only foundational consciousness has been taught first, just as, for example, although they have totally eliminated all conceptualization grasping at “I” and “mine” are therefore free of egoistic view as well as its residual dispositions, as a skilful means to help the world that propose the terms “I” and “mind” to comprehend the truth of his teaching, the Blessed Buddha taught in terms such as “I” and “mine.” In the same manner, although the entities do not possess intrinsic existence that they do possess intrinsic existence has been taught on the provisional level alone. This is a skilful means to help the world to gradually comprehend suchness. In brief, the meaning is this. Judging by the Buddha’s utterance of “I” and “mine” it appears as if he possesses such conceptions, yet the absence of conceptualization is the definitive truth. Likewise, when phenomena are taught to possess intrinsic existence, [247] it appears as if this is the Buddha’s intention; however, the non-existence of phenomena in such terms is the definitive truth.

That the presentation of the conventions accords with the world is as stated extensively in the stanzas in concordance with the Eastern Mountain group:

If the saviors of the world
Do not engage in accord with the world,
What is the ultimate of the Buddha
And Buddhahood, no one will know.

The aggregates and the elements,
And the sources, their nature is accepted as one;
He who thus teaches the three worlds,
This is in concession to the world.

The realities that have no name,
As they’re inconceivable yet by names
He who speaks of these to sentient beings,
This is in concession the world.

Revealing clearly the non-entity,

He who abides in the Buddha's nature,
That there is no non-entity at all –
This is in concession to the world.

Not seeing facts and non-facts,
The cessation and the sublime truth,
He who utters such excellent speech –
This is in concession to the world.

There is no cessation and no birth,
Though equal within ultimate expanse,
He who teaches the eon of blazing fire –
This is in concession to the world.

Throughout all three times
The nature of sentient beings is not perceived;
Yet the sentient being's sphere is taught –
This is in concession to the world.³⁹²

Of these the last stanza presents selflessness of person in terms of the sentient beings devoid of intrinsic existence, while the remaining stanzas presents selflessness of phenomena both entities and nonentities. Since *Blaze of Reasoning* states that Eastern Mountain group branched off gradually from Mahasaṅghika³⁹³ [248] it seems that there is one [sutra] in the Disciple's basket that very clearly teaches no intrinsic existence of phenomena.

³⁹² Cited in MABh, p.*

³⁹³ Tarkajvala, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

The Sixth Ground IV Refutation of the Mind Only Standpoint

2” Refutation of the standpoint of the Mind Only in particular

This has three parts:

- a” Refutation of consciousness with no external reality as intrinsic existence
- b” Refutation of the valid cognition which is the proof for the intrinsic existence of dependent phenomena
- c” Demonstrating that the term “only” in the teaching of Mind Only does not reject external reality

The first has two parts:

- i” Presenting the opponent’s standpoint
- ii” Refuting that standpoint

The proponents of consciousness [only] who cannot bear the Middle Way standpoint presented thus far set forth the truths on the basis of propounding their standpoints constructed by conceptualization, which is not the intention of the Buddha. To elucidate the standpoints that are presented in their own texts the opponent’s position is stated [first] in the following:

**Without the apprehended object no subject is seen;
Cognizing the three worlds as mere consciousness,
The bodhisattva who abides in the wisdom
Shall realize suchness in terms of consciousness only.**

**Just as an ocean that is stirred by a windstorm,
From it emerge waves after waves,
So from the seed of all called foundational consciousness
Through its potency emerge [what are] consciousness only.**

The bodhisattva on the sixth level who abides or reside in the most excellent perfection wisdom and meditates on suchness, through the reasoning by means of which he has realized, seen and internalized correct suchness without reifying the separatedness of subject and object ever more, he will come to realize the truth which is the realization suchness in terms of mere consciousness. This is how they will interpret.

Given that there are no external realities they realize the mind and mental factors too as mere dependently originated entities with no external realities [as their objects], this is referred to as “realizing suchness in terms of mere consciousness.” Again, when asked “How does such a bodhisattva realize suchness?” They respond in the following.

In that this bodhisattva [has established] through the reasoning which shall be described later how phenomena such as form emerge from the maturation of inner dispositions, [249] they do not perceive any subjects that apprehend facts that are separate from them. They realize thoroughly that the cyclic existence of the three realms is mere consciousness. Having realized thus they cultivate familiarity with this suchness of the emptiness of duality and perceive this essence of non-duality directly by means of his own experience. Therefore, through this gradual process of familiarity that preceded before, the bodhisattva on the sixth level will realize suchness in terms of mere consciousness.

If asked “If all of these are mere consciousness with no external realities, in that case how, without external reality, the mind alone that assume the aspects [of these external objects] arise?” They respond thus: Just as, for example, from the stirring or shaking of the great ocean, which is the source of the waves, by the windstorm one perceives the waves of the ocean that find their forms as if competing each other while the ocean remains unshaken [at its depth] as if in sleep, similarly, it is from the seed of all outer and inner phenomena known as foundational consciousness, through the ripening of the potentials corresponding to their own class imprinted upon foundational consciousness by the ceasing of [afflictions] such as attachment and [virtues] such as faith this imperfect [world of] dependent class that is mere consciousness originate. It is this that the childish conceives in the manner of object-subject [distinction] in terms of separate outer and inner [worlds]. Nevertheless, insofar as an object that is of separate substance from consciousness, there is not even a slightest degree of existence.

So just as those who profound Èÿvara and alike as the creator of beings, as described in the following,

Spider is the cause of spider web;
So is water crystal is that of water;
And just as tree trunk is the cause of branches,
It is the cause of all beings.³⁹⁴

those who propose foundational consciousness too [250] speak of consciousness as the source of all entities and therefore possessor of all the seeds.

The difference is while Èÿvara is eternal, foundational consciousness is impermanent. Therefore, it is through teaching foundational consciousness that many who have been habituated to non-Buddhist views for many lifetimes are tamed.

[Question:] In the context of presenting the views of the Mind Only school in the commentary, repeated statements of “There are no external realities.” It [also] states “As for objects that are separate from consciousness not even a slightest degree exists” thus

³⁹⁴ Check source and also interpretation of the verse. Check Palden Choje's *Annotations* (p. 72) Jamyang Shepa cites this too in his *Great Exposition of Philosophies*, p.*

the object of negation is qualified. In commenting on the line “They’re conceived as physical sense organs such as eyes” it states “There are no eye organ that is separate from consciousness.” So in the context of Mind Only view should one understand [the rejection of external reality] in accordance with such qualification to the object of negation, or should assert that the five [sense objects] such as visible form as well as the five sense faculties do not exist without any qualification?

[Response:] In this commentary [of Candrakīrti] both [approaches] exist, that is with qualification and without qualification. However, just as when repeated instances of qualification is found in the context of negating arising one then needs to extend this to the all the instances where it is not found, here too one should do the same. [For example] in *Summary of the Great Vehicle*, which is a text [authoritative] for the opponent, it states:

Why is it called appropriating consciousness? Because it is the cause of all physical sense organs and it is the source from which all physical bodies are appropriated. Thus so long as one’s lifespan lasts it retains the five physical sense organs without disintegration.³⁹⁵

And:

The common [seed] refers to all the seeds of the container world; the uncommon refers to all seeds of the individual sense bases [of beings]. [251] All the common ones are the seeds that emerge with no sensations.³⁹⁶

Thus the seed of the container world that resides upon the foundational consciousness is described as the seed of those entities without sensations. This is stated similarly in *Summary* [*bsdu ba*] in as well.³⁹⁷ In commentary on the *Sutra on Dependent Origination*, it states that it is on the condition of foundational consciousness name and form come into being; of these the remaining four name aggregates and the form are described as consisting of elements and their derivatives. It states that although these do not exist in the formless realms it exist in the other two realms. Thus there are many instances [in the texts] where it seems that material form is accepted. If this is not the case, then for all the conventions such as form, sound and so on that are defined on the basis of form aggregate, it would appear, unless new terms are created, the terms that are already given cannot be utilized as conventions. Among the Indian Buddhist schools there does not appear to be any that maintains “This is an excellent system” despite seeing that [in this] the use of such [normal] conventions becomes untenable. The meaning of the expression “those who propound the object of knowledge to be internal” is this: The object of knowledge refers to form, sound and so on, and they are not accepted as external; rather they are asserted to be inner entities. Hence they are so-called.

³⁹⁵ *Mahāyānaśāstra*, Tengyur, sems tsam, *

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p.*

³⁹⁷ *. *

If enquired, “If the Mind Only school accepts form, sound and so on, then their rejection of these as external will become only a semantic argument for these very [facts like] form and so on that are perceived as external are posited as external realities [by others].”

This would be like saying to the Middle Way school who, while negating intrinsic existence of form and so on posits form and so on, “Because the very [facts like] form and so on that are perceived as intrinsic existence are posited [by others] as intrinsic existence, so the argument on whether or not this exists is a semantic argument.” These [two] seem to be the difficult point of both schools [252]. Therefore, not only is the system of the Middle Way difficult, in this Mind Only system too, when external reality is negated form and so on become nonexistent, however, if form and so on are posited, it is perceived, that one must also posit external reality as well. Although these points are difficult fearing length I have not written more here.

Given that the presentation of [meaning of] the scriptures is known to be as explained before, one should accept without hesitation dependent class [of phenomena] which possess the essence of intrinsic existence. This is because it is accepted as the cause of all the network of conceptualization, such as grasping at the imputed existence of subject-object [duality] in terms of separate substances.

Just as the illusion of snake due to [coiled] rope as a reason does not arise where there is no rope, and just as illusions [that one experience] due to [phenomena] such as vase do not arise in the sky or alike where there is no physical site and so on, similarly, without external reality what causes the illusory conceptions of blue objects and so on as external? Therefore, without doubt, one must accept an imperfect dependent phenomena that is perceived in terms of subject-object substance duality, which is the cause of the illusion of the external. Because this basis of perception is the condition of both bondage to afflicted existence and freedom of enlightenment.

In any of the two systems, the Middle Way or the Mind Only, if there is the possibility of demonstrating that very basis of clinging – which is perceived by the sentient being and is clung to as true existence in accordance with such appearance – as being empty of that object of clinging, the realization of such emptiness constitutes a path [to liberation]. So not taking the realization of emptiness in the form of a negation of the object of clinging of ordinary sentient being’s clinging to true existence, if one establishes some other kind of emptiness, [253] this will not constitute an antidote to neither the coarse nor subtle levels of clinging to true existence that is ingrained within [our minds] since beginningless time.

Therefore, the absence of all that is imputed upon the dependent phenomenon – the object of clinging that grasps subject and object in terms of substance duality just as they are perceived - this emptiness of such basis as being devoid of such an object of negation, this shall be seen perfectly [to be so]. What is left behind, namely the basis of emptiness and emptiness [itself], these are true existence. Since one will come to know this perfect truth clearly as it is, one will uphold the meaning of emptiness excellently as well.

The opponent's position presented here is the meaning of the statement "That which is absent in this .." as found in the *Bodhisattva Levels* and the commentary on *Discriminating the Middle from the Extremes*,³⁹⁸ as explained above. That the interpretation of the statement "That which is nowhere ..." as found in the commentary on *Sublime Continuum* is totally different from the preceding two [texts] and is in the manner of Middle Way explanation; fearing of length I shall not about this here.

**Therefore that which is dependent nature,
It is the cause for imputation of things;
It comes into being without external objects;
It's existent and exists not as the object of all elaborations.**

This dependent phenomena emerges from its own dispositions alone with no external reality, it is intrinsic existence, and it exists as something that is not ultimately an object of all conceptual elaborations of language and thought as understood by this system. As for the linguistic expressions of "outer" and "inner," they uphold the unexamined aspects [of our experience]. In brief, the dependent phenoma is characterized by three properties: (1) It comes into being without there being external reality, (2) it has intrinsic existence, and (3) it is not ultimately the object of all conceptual elaborations. "Being the cause of imputed existence" is included within [the characteristic of] intrinsically real entity, it is not separate from the three properties.

The statement "The dependent phenomena exists" does not refer to its mere existence. This is as stated by master Sthiramati in the following: [254]

As it has been stated "Not perfect truth, conceptuality exists," "intrinsically" is the remaining term.³⁹⁹

Ascertainment of this qualification is critical for [understanding] later part [of our text].

ii" Refuting that standpoint

This has two parts:

- 1') Stating the refutations extensively
- 2') Concluding the refutation by means of summary

The first has three parts:

- a') Rejecting the analogy of intrinsic existence of consciousness without external reality
- b') Rejecting its reference, that is the arising of consciousness devoid of [external] objects
- c') Demonstrating how such rejection and meditation on foulness are not inconsistent

³⁹⁸ *.*

³⁹⁹ dbu mtha'I 'grel bshad, p.*

The first has two parts:

- i') Rejecting the analogy of dream
- ii') Rejecting the analogy of seeing falling hair

The first has three parts:

- (1') How the analogy of dream does not establish intrinsic existence of consciousness
- (2') How the analogy of dream does not establish nonexistence of external reality
- (3') How the analogy of dream establishes all entities as false

The first is as follows.

**No external objects but mind [exists], where is your example?
“Like a dream,” if you say, do reflect upon that [point].**

I you, the Mind Only school, assert that there is no external reality and that intrinsically real mind exists, where is the analogy for this that you could cite as “for example.” So let me analyze this point. The Mind Only responds: If, for example, one sleeps inside a very small room and if one falsely [perceives] a herd of mad elephants because of his sleep, how can those elephants be inside that room? They cannot be. Similarly, if he asserts, I accept this intrinsic existence of consciousness without there being external objects just like the dream of that person. To demonstrate that this [response] too is pointless, the following is stated:

**Since for me the mind does not exist even in a dream,
So your analogy does not exist [as mutually established].**

Let us reflect upon, that is analyze, this [point] here. What is this point that is to be analyzed? This existence of the mind that exists by virtue of its own characteristics, which assumes the aspects of a herd of mad elephants even in a dream, [255] just as its objects – the elephants – do not exist, the same is true [of that mind] in my system as well; for it is unborn. So if there is no consciousness that exists by virtue of its own characteristics, in that case, there is for you no analogy that is valid for both of us. Therefore, without external realities there cannot be consciousness.

It is not the case that here it is being demonstrated that consciousness does not exist just as the elephants that appeared in the dream do not exist. This must be definitely accepted as demonstrating the absence of intrinsically existing consciousness. This is because the Mind Only school's acceptance of dependent phenomena without external reality refers to intrinsic existence of dependent phenomena. And in summarizing these refutations, it reads “So just as the object of knowledge does not exist/ Cognitions too are likewise ...”⁴⁰⁰ In the commentary on this [summary] this is clearly stated where it reads “Know that the cognitions that assume the aspects of the object of knowledge too is unborn by

⁴⁰⁰ MA, 6:*

virtue of its own essence.”⁴⁰¹ Furthermore, in both the root text and its commentary when refuting this kind [of concepts] there are many instances where the object of negation is qualified. Moreover, the statement that ignorance engenders volition and volition engenders consciousness in the following is from the perspective of one’s own standpoint:

Again why is that the great being has stated in this
That the mind has arisen from ignorance and action?⁴⁰²

Therefore, as for those who assert that the nonexistence of consciousness is the position of that [master Candrakīrti], this is not a matter of doubt that would arise in a thinking person. So one should understand that all of this equations drawn between the cognizable and the cognizer with respect to existence and nonexistence on the basis of qualification of the object of negation.

If one contents, “If there is no deluded consciousness in dreams, it would be not possible for the experience at the time of dream to be remembered after waking up from that dream.” This is an argument based on the assumption that if there is no consciousness that exists by means its own essence there is consciousness. [256] However, such argument too remains untenable.

**If the mind exists because the dream is recalled when awoken,
In that case external objects too would exist likewise.
Your recollection that I saw it [that is the dream],
This can be found also for external realities.**

If, from the recollection of the experience of dream when being awoken intrinsically real dream mind exists, then those dream objects like elephants and so on which are perceived as being external too would similarly exist. Why is this so? Because, just as for you the mental consciousness exists on the ground that the recollection exists at the time of being awoken that I saw it when dreaming, similarly, such recollection that I saw it when dreaming exists for the external objects as well. Therefore, you are compelled to admit that either the objects too exist, or that consciousness too does not exist.

[Question:] Given that recollection of the subject and object of dream exist in our own position, how does one address the question of their existence or nonexistence?

[Response:] Here the commentary mentions both the two elements – the recollection of the dream experience and the recollection of the experience of the content of the dream. So when elephants and so on are perceived in a dream, just as when one sees a reflection of a face [in a mirror] although the eye consciousness that perceives it does not *experience* the face yet it has an experience of an object in relation to the reflection, in the same manner, at the time of dream too, although there is no experience of object in terms of an elephant there is an experience of an object in terms of perceiving [something] as

⁴⁰¹ MABh, p.*

⁴⁰² MA, 6:*

and elephant. So although one speaks of “recollecting the object” it is the recollection of the experience of that object. The distinguishing between perceiving and experiencing is, except for some [rare instances], is not necessary for situations such as the present context.

Therefore, as for dependent phenomena that exist by virtue of its own characteristics yet empty of external reality, this cannot be posited. For it is impossible [to find] an actual example and there do not exist example similar to the one used in the context of proving prior and posterior lives, where although there is no actual example, one is cited on the basis of stating the syllogism by way of a different formulation. Therefore, one should understand that the refutation of the Mind Only standpoint involves [the use of] extremely powerful form of reasoning. [257]

(2') How the analogy of dream does not establish nonexistence of external reality

This is as follows.

**Since eye consciousness is impossible in a sleep,
It does not exist so mental consciousness alone exists;
It's aspects are clung to as external realities;
So, just like in a dream, if you accept here in the waking state,**

If visible forms, such as the body of elephant, exist in a dream then the visual consciousness that apprehends it would also be present there; this, however, is untenable. Because when one is in sleep visual cognition or consciousness is impossible in [that state] perturbed by sleep so there are no sense bases in the form of visible bodies, such as [the body of] an elephant [in a dream]; there exists only mental consciousness. Therefore, it is the case that no external reality such as a visible form. It is on the basis of mere appearance of external objects to the mental consciousness the manifest clinging to it as external emerges. So just as consciousness emerges in a dream without any external reality, [the Mind Only] might argue, this is true also during the waking state as well. If, this is maintained, it is done so with the thought that even if one allows that the previous analogy did not hold the analogy of dream does establish the existence of consciousness devoid of external reality. That this is incorrect and that it is impossible for [such] mental consciousness to emerge in a dream is stated in the following:

**So just as for you external realities do not arise,
Likewise the mental consciousness too are unborn;
So the eyes, its objects and the cognition endangered,
All these three factors [of experience] are false.
The remaining three, such as ears, have no arising as well.**

The point here is this. Even if one allows that visible forms does not exist in a dream, because intrinsically existing mental consciousness that is devoid [of visible forms as objects] still remains impossible even in a dream. Therefore, the convergence of absence of external reality and intrinsically real mental consciousness is not suited as an analogy.

So, just as according to you, external object or facts remain unborn in dream the mental consciousness too is intrinsically unborn. Therefore, just as when awoken and when one sees visible forms the eyes, the visible form and mental consciousness come together, likewise, in a dream too when an object is registered it is done so by a cognition on the basis of coming together of the three [factors]. Just as in the dream the eyes and the visible form are not present, [258] the mind produced by these two, namely visual consciousness too does not exist. So all three of these – the dream eyes, [dream] visible forms and the mental awareness – are false. Like these three factors of the eyes, the three factors of the remaining [senses], such as ears, and so on, too are devoid of intrinsic arising. The word “so on” here encompasses from sound and auditory consciousness to mental faculty, phenomena-element, and mental consciousness. So the four [sense faculties] from ear faculty up to the bodily faculty, the four [sense objects] from sound up to tactile form, and the four [sensory experiences] from auditory consciousness up to tactile consciousness, with respect to these, just as stated in the context of visual consciousness, they are false in that although they do not exist in a dream they appear to do so. As for the three [factors] of mental faculty, although they exist in a dream they are [still] false in that they appear as intrinsic existence while they do not exist in such a manner.

Therefore, those who take the presence of sensory consciousness in a dream state as being the position of this master [Candrakīrti] and engage in its refutation are being coarse in their application of intelligence. This is what is called “Before the dawn of the opponent’s position [has arisen] the sun of refutation shines.”⁴⁰³ So cast off [this pursuit] far away. Some Tibetans who harbor the pretense of being great scholar fail to comprehend even on a coarse level the positions of those who are masters in such philosophical tenets, masters who are known to be great bodhisattvas, and appear to take them as a source of continual accumulation of demerits and lead many sentient beings to such demerits. So be vigilant on this.

Here, just as the Mind Only explains in the context of the line “Since eye consciousness is impossible in sleep,” when stating one’s own standpoint, master Bhāvaviveka responds in the following [to demonstrate] that the analogy does not hold. [Candrakīrti writes in the commentary:

A form that belongs to the category of mental objects, a form perceivable by mental consciousness does exist in a dream state. [259] Therefore, consciousness never exists without an object. So asserts some.

This too is incorrect. In the dream state the existence of the three [factors] is totally impossible. If you accept such [a view] in order to displace other’s standpoint in that case the analogy of dream and its reference become pointless. In that it [the analogy] is not a fact that is false it cannot illustrate the actual referent to be a fact of falsehood.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰³ *Check if this is a reference to Chapa.

⁴⁰⁴ MABh, p.*

The meaning of this statement is the following. The intrinsic existence of the three factors – the object, sense faculty and consciousness – is totally impossible even in a dream state. Therefore, the existence of a form in terms of a mental object that is of different substance from consciousness in a dream state is untenable. This is how [the response] should be given. In that case, since one too must accept such a form and also there is no contradiction in that form being present in a dream state, it is clear that Bhāvaviveka accepts such a form to be intrinsically real. So [the above statement from the commentary] should be understood as an argument [to demonstrate] the nonexistence of such a form.

Because citing the example of dream can displace the Mind Only's standpoint that there is no forms that are external bases, so in order to help displace [this standpoint] if one were to accept the form as existing by virtue of its own characteristics, in that case, it will be pointless for the Madhyamika to cite dream as an analogy when establishing absence of true existence. This is because the dream is not a fact that is not characterized by falsehood because [for you] it emerges as an analogy from its existence by virtue of its own characteristics. So it would be impossible for an actual referent illustrated by it to be established as being false. So until intrinsic existence is negated the reasoning sign and the predicate cannot be related to the analogy. Therefore, the response presented earlier by us in terms of how everything that appears in dream do not possess intrinsic existence is far better. [260]

[Question:] In that case, does our standpoint accept those forms that are perceived so clearly in dream as mental object forms or not?

[Response:] Since there are no sensory consciousness in a dream state what appear as five sense objects are perceived by mental consciousness alone so one cannot posit [the distinctions of] the five sense bases, such as visible form. This is, therefore, analogous to positing the clear appearance of skeletons to mental consciousness alone [in a meditative state] as mental objects. Thus it *is* a mental object form and, out of the five types of such forms, it is an **imputed/constructed** form.⁴⁰⁵ On this basis, one should understand the status of many other similar facts.

(3')How the analogy of dream establishes all entities as false

For the reason that what appear as the three factors – object, sense faculty and consciousness – in dream are all unreal, so on the basis of dream being established clearly as not having true existence, so to prove that other phenomena which are not yet established as non true existence too as being not true existence, it is stated in the following that even when awoken the phenomena will be proven to be devoid of intrinsic existence.

**So just as in a dream here in the waking state too,
The entities are false and the mind does not exist;**

⁴⁰⁵ *List the five mental object forms and illustrate each of them.

No spheres of experience exists nor the senses.

**Here until one is awoken and so long
One is not woken up, until then the three exist;
Once awoken the three [factors] do no exist,
This is true also for those awoken from delusion sleep.**

Just as the three – the object, sense faculty and consciousness – of dream are false, during the waking state too the entities are false. Therefore the mind does not exist intrinsically; likewise, the objects of experience of the senses like visible form does not exist so too do the sense faculties lack intrinsic existence. Thus it is stated in the sutra:

Just as though animals of magical illusion appear
As seen they are not real in actual fact,
So like an illusion and like dream,
The Tatṅgatha taught the phenomena to be likewise.⁴⁰⁶

And:

The beings of cyclic existence are like a dream;
There is none that has birth or death;
“Sentience,” “human” and “life” cannot be found;
All these phenomena resemble a foam or a banana tree.⁴⁰⁷

Thus [Candrakīrti] states that then these [citations] and many others will become well-uttered insights. [261]

The line “none that is birth” and so on must be related to the line “not real in actual fact” in the manner of qualifying the object of negation. The presentation of how all phenomena do not exist in actual fact by means of the analogy of dream will be commensurate with the Middle Way standpoint. It is not commensurate with the Mind Only position. So [Candrakīrti] states that these [citations] will become well-uttered insights.

Therefore, in this world although there is the sleep of ignorance during the waking state when one is free of another kind of sleep, which is the ordinary sleep, to some who perceive [the world] in a manner of dreaming in a sleep of ignorance, insofar as they are free from such sleep and not awoken until then for them the three factors – the object, sense faculty, and consciousness – exist just as all three factors exist in a dream. However, when one is awoken the three factors of the dream do not exist. In the same manner, after the extinction of the sleep of delusion, that is from the eradication of it, the Buddhas who have directly actualized the ultimate expanse, all three factors do not exist. Therefore, consciousness without external reality does not exist.

⁴⁰⁶ Cited in MABh, p.*

⁴⁰⁷ Cited in MABh, p.*

It is within the perspective of [the Buddha's] seeing of reality-as-it-is that the three factors are not perceived. Within the perspective of seeing the reality-in-its-manifoldness, however, although there is no perception due to the subject itself being tainted by residual dispositions of ignorance, those appearances that arise due to the tainted consciousness of others, these the Buddha knows on the basis of perceiving via their appearance to such [tainted] consciousness.

ii') Rejecting the analogy of seeing falling hair

**The cognition of the one has cataracts,
Which, through the power of the cataracts, see falling hair,
From the perspective of this [cognition] both are real;
Yet to the one who sees the facts clearly both are false.**

**If cognition exists without a cognizable,
Then even with cataract that linked the eyes
With the perceived hair there would be its cognition;
Since this is not so therefore it does not exist.**

If they respond "Given that those with cataracts perceive falling hair and so on which are not existent, so even though there is no external reality consciousness exists intrinsically," this too is untenable. Why is this so? When someone with cataracts perceives falling hair, because of a cognition influenced by cataracts, [262] from the perspective of the cognition of such a person, both the visual consciousness and the object, which is the aspect of the falling hair, exist. However, to those who sees the facts clearly, that is from the perspective of the sight of those who have no cataracts, both the appearance of falling hair and that cognition that perceives are false – that is they are unborn. That even the object in the sense of mere appearance does not exist is difficult to ascertain [for the one with cataracts]. However, that this is so must be admitted without hesitation.

If this is not so and if intrinsically real cognition that assumes the aspect of falling hair as its object can arise in someone with cataracts even though such falling hair does not exist, then even without the cataracts, which is associated with the eyes infected with cataracts that sees the object, namely the falling hair, just as in the case of someone with cataracts, the cognition seeing falling hair will arise. Because they are both equal in that their object does not exist.

This [argument] draws the following parallel. Just as the consequence is thrown that if something arises from intrinsically real another then it must arise from everything else that is another, in the same manner, it argues that if one instance of intrinsically real cognition arises, it would become untenable to maintain that while non-existence of the object, namely the falling hair, is equal, the sight [of falling hair] arises in the one with cataracts and does not in the one with no cataracts. This is because since that cognition can become deluded without being contingent upon the cataracts the two become unrelated to each other. Therefore, given that the cognition perceiving falling hair does

not arise in the one with no cataracts, that intrinsically real consciousness with no external reality does not exist.

b') Rejecting its reference, that is the arising of consciousness devoid of [external] objects

This has three parts:

i') Rejecting that it is from the ripening or lack of it that cognition of [external] reality arises or not

ii') Rejecting the restatement of how consciousness without external reality

iii') Demonstrating how there is no contradiction with scriptures for refuting the Mind Only standpoint

The first has two parts:

(1') Stating the opponent's standpoint [263]

(2') Refuting that standpoint

The first is as follows.

**If [you assert] that because the potential is not there
In those who see [clearly], so there cannot be its cognition,
It's not because they have no existing objects of knowledge;**

[The Mind Only] might assert the following: If the existence of what appears as falling hair is the cause for its consciousness to arise, it is true that such falling hair would be appear to someone without cataracts. However, this is not the case. What is it then? It is the ripening or the lack of dispositions for the arising of consciousness imprinted in the past that is the cause of arising or nonarising of its consciousness. Therefore, to the person who experiences the ripening of the imprint of a different preceding instance of cognition that assumed the aspect of falling hair, to such person alone the cognition that has the aspect of falling hair will emerge. Given that the person who sees the objects with no cataracts, as he does experience the ripening of the potential for perceiving falling hair for him who has no cataracts the cognition that sees falling hair will not arise. So it is not because the object of cognition, falling hair, does not exist that such cognition does not arise.

(2') Refuting that standpoint

This has three parts:

(a') Refuting intrinsic existence of potential in the present [consciousness]

(b') Refuting intrinsic existence of potential in the future [consciousness]

(c') Refuting intrinsic existence of potential in the past [consciousness]

The first is as follows.

Since that potential does not exist it's not established.

**For the already arisen there is no existent of potential;
For that which is by nature unborn there is no potential;**

If there is something called “potential” which is intrinsic existence, in that case, we could allow the possibility of the emergence of consciousness from the ripening or nonripening of such potential. However, since such potential that exists by virtue of an essence does not exist it is not established. How is it that it is not established? Let us enquire, “When you conceive of such potential, is it connected with the present consciousness, or is it connected with the past consciousness or the future?” Now here, to the born – that is the present – the existence of a potential that exists by virtue of an essence is impossible. To the unborn, to that which is future, no such potential exists.

For instance, when one asserts potential to the present consciousness, the two – the consciousness and the potential [264] – will be equal in terms of their temporal existence. In that case, if [the relation between] the potential and the bearer of the potential is that of the sixth [genitive] case – that is “the potent consciousness” – the two cannot be different entities. Yet, the potent consciousness cannot exist as the potential for if it does, for the effect be such that it will have no other causes. So even when the sprout is born the seed will remain without being disintegrated. If, however, [the relation between] the potential and the bearer of the potential is that of the fifth [ablative] case, then the emergence of the arisen consciousness from the potential becomes untenable for then the effect will exist even at the time of the cause. Therefore, the potential that is the cause does not exist in the present consciousness.

(b') Refuting intrinsic existence of potential in the future

This is as follows.

**Without properties there can be no property holder;
Otherwise this will exist for the son of a barren woman as well.**

**If you wish to call it thus because it will come into being,
Without the potential there can be no coming into being;
That the being through mutual dependence of facts
Is not a being so the sublime ones have taught.**

If the potential exists in the unborn consciousness, [is it not the case] that when the expression is used “the potential for consciousness” the potential is the basis of the property and the consciousness the property? Now the unborn or the future consciousness cannot be expressed as in an affirmative term as “consciousness” nor can it be expressed in terms of an intrinsically real negation as “not consciousness.” In that the future

consciousness does not exist as consciousness what [property] can qualify this potential in such terms as “It is the potential for this consciousness?” Nothing can.

Thinking of a specific consciousness that will arise from the potential, if one makes the statement “This is the potential for this consciousness” and assert that these two will a property and its basis. [265] For example, in the worldly convention one can ask “Cook the rice” and “Weave a cloth from this yarn” thus, with the view of the cooked rice and the woven cloth, one speaks in such terms. In the *Treasury of Higher Knowledge* too, when it states “The womb-born is threefold:/The universal monarch and the two self-arisen ones/” it describes the entering into womb by what would become a universal monarch and so on as these entering the womb. Similarly, thinking of the consciousness that will emerge, they might assert, we call that “the potential for consciousness.”

This too is fruitless. For if exists at occasional moments, then that effect will come into being at some point. What are certain never to come into being at any time, such as the son of a barren woman as well as the unconditioned space, these never come into being in the present or in any latter time. Therefore, if intrinsically real potential exists, one could allow for the consciousness to emerge, however since intrinsically real future consciousness does not exist at any time, the potential for engendering such consciousness does not exist at all. So, like the son of a barren woman, without an intrinsically real potential that can produce consciousness this intrinsically real consciousness cannot come into being.

In many contexts, when the Madhyamika negates the arising of the sprout as existing by virtue of self-defining characteristics, the argument, such as that if the sprout arises even though it does not exist at the time of the seed, such [nonexisting] things as the horn of a rabbit will arise too is presented. The significance of throwing such an extreme absurd consequence is this. With respect to a sprout that exists by virtue of self-defining characteristics, if it does not exist at one time, it should never exist at any time thus it becomes indistinguishable from something that is not an established basis. It is totally not the case that [the Madhyamika] is negating [266] that in general if the sprout arises although it does not exist at the time of the seed, there is then the consequence that the horn of a rabbit will arise [as well]. This reasoning also explains [the example of] the cooked rice and so on for if things arise intrinsically even the cooked rice and so on, which will emerge [in future], will become totally nonexistent.

Furthermore, they might argue, it is in relation to the existence of consciousness to be that its potential is posited and it is in relation to the potential that consciousness is posited. So they are established on the basis of a mutual dependence. This is what we uphold.

It is because of this the sublime ones who are endowed with knowledge have stated that consciousness does not possess intrinsic existence. The commentary states that relational existents such as “long and short” and “there and here” exist in terms of imputation and are not established as intrinsic existence. Therefore, it is not existence in general that is being negated upon these; it is intrinsic existence that is being negated. This distinction

must be understood. So if you speak in such terms, you should follow after our manner of speaking. Therefore, even in the future consciousness too the potential does not exist.⁴⁰⁸

(c') Refuting intrinsic existence of potential in the past [consciousness]

Now to present how the potential does not exist in the past as well, it is stated:

**If it's from the ripening of potential of the ceased it emerges,
It will emerge from the potential for other [things as well].
In the continuum bearer they exist as mutually distinct;
Therefore everything will emerge from everything.**

**As there does not exist in these continuum-bearers
Distinct continuums to each of these bearers,**

If it asserted that it is from the ripening of the potential of the ceased consciousness, a specific potential left upon foundational consciousness as a disposition for the sake of a commensurate effect by a consciousness that has arisen and is ceasing, that future consciousness emerge, then from a potential of an intrinsical existing other an intrinsically existing another effect consciousness will come into being. Why is this so? This is so because the members of continuum emerge in successive sequence and, according to you, the preceding and subsequent members [of the continuum] exist distinct by virtue of their essence. [267]

Here, the root of [Sanskrit term for] a member of continuum is *ta nu*, which refers to “thrive;” and when *rkyen* is applied it [asquires the meaning of] transmitting through thus referring to “continuum.” So like the flow of a river through the formation of a continuum it operates through the relatedness of cause and effect. Therefore, [“continuum”] refers something that abides without interruption of a broken interval through succession of birth and death, something that constructs the moments appropriates [at least] three temporal states. It is the whole whose parts are the individual moments; it is not merely that the preceding and subsequent moments are uninterrupted. Given that this exists in the momentary things, which are the constituents of the continuum, so these momentary things that are the parts of the continuum are referred to as “members of continuum.” Because the constituents or the parts of the continuum are of the continuum the continuum is referred to as the “appropriator of them.”⁴⁰⁹ For example, vase is the appropriator of the mouth, throat and so on of the vase.

These diverse preceding and subsequent moments are mutually distinct from each other and they are asserted to be intrinsically different by the opponent. In that case, from the potential of something that is intrinsically another something other will emerge. If, you [the opponent] think “As I accept this, this is not a flaw,” [the following argument is stated]:

¹ These last four sentences of the paragraph are actually a paraphrase from Candrakīrti's commentary on *Entering the Middle Way*, p.*

⁴⁰⁹ Up to the end of this sentence, Tsonghapa is paraphrasing from Candrakīrti's commentary p.*

**So there is no fault, if it is asserted, this is the thesis;
The occasion for nondistinct continuums is untenable.**

**The properties of Maitreya and Upagupta
Do not belong to the same continuum for they're different.
That which are distinct by virtue of own characteristics,
It's untenable for them to belong to the same continuum.**

In that case, with respect to all entities, everything will come into being from everything.

If you assert that although the individual moments of a thing of which the temporal moments come by in a successive sequence are distinct or different from each other by virtue of their essence, nevertheless, since these temporal states do not possess separate continuum, that is they share the same [single] continuum. So there is the no ill-consequence of everything coming into being everything else. That the preceding and subsequent moments belong to the same continuum is the main response [of the opponent] to repudiate the absurd consequence levelled against [the assertion of] arising-from-another.

If a shared single continuum is established for temporal stages that exist by virtue of their essence one could allow that there is no such flaw, [268] however, since such shared single continuum is not established, that there is such shared single continuum remains a thesis to be proven. Why is this so? This is because it is illogical for a shared single continuum to exist in preceding and subsequent moments that exist as distinct by virtue of their essence. For example, because what pertains to or belongs to the stream of Maitreya and Upagupta are distinct in that they belong to distinct persons, they are not shared by the same continuum. In the same manner, it is illogical for the preceding and subsequent moments which are distinct by virtue of their own self-defining characteristics to belong to a shared single continuum.

In that this is so, it is shown that the reason why [the attempted] repudiation of the absurd consequence levelled against arising-from-another – that the seed and sprout of rice share the same continuum while such a seed does not share the same continuum with barley sprout so it is not that everything *can* emerge from everything else – cannot repel the objection pertains to the fact that the opponent has accepted otherness that exists by virtue of one's own characteristics. It is therefore extremely clear that this [absurd consequence] is not levelled against [the acceptance of] mere otherness. So those who turn this into a *domino effect* [argument] or, failing to comprehend that with the expression “intrinsically existing another” the object of negation has been qualified, leave aside the very reason the glorious Candrakīrti has cited on how [the opponent] cannot repudiate the objection and fabricate [their own explanation], they are [in actual fact] polluting a perfect system.

ii') Rejecting the restatement of how consciousness without external reality

This has two parts:

- (1') Stating the opponent's standpoint
- (2') Refuting that standpoint

Having presented thus far, once again the Mind Only, given that they [wish to] propound their own system and with the view of achieving their aim, they state the following:

**The arising of visual cognition is this:
It arises totally immediate from its own potential;
This potential that is the support of consciousness
Is called "the physical organ, the eyes."**

The potential for the arising of eye cognition or consciousness, a disposition is imprinted upon foundational consciousness by another consciousness immediately as it ceases. [269] And it is from the ripening of this [potential] that later an eye consciousness that follows after the pattern of the previous [consciousness] will arise. So it is this support, the uninterrupted moments of the potential for the arising of eye consciousness – according to which eye consciousness arises from an uninterrupted moments of potential – that the worldly people through their delusion conceive of as the physical organ, the eyes. There is no eye faculty that is separate from consciousness. Extend this similarly to the remaining physical sense organs as well.

Here, the disposition that is the cause for the arising of eye consciousness is its causal condition; while the eye faculty is its dominant condition. That here the eye faculty is presented as the immediate cause of eye consciousness is understood with respect to the stage when the disposition for the arising of eye consciousness is ripened; it is not intended for any eye faculty. In this respect, the *Differentiation of the Middle from the Extremes* states:

Cognitions of objects, of sentience and of self,
The consciousness that perceive these
Will clearly arise but there is no [external] objects.⁴¹⁰

Its statement that the consciousness of objects, such as form and so on, and the sentient, that is the five sense faculties, will clearly arise, is intended [refer] to foundational consciousness. Master Sthiramati too describes the physical sense organs as the object of focus of foundational consciousness.⁴¹¹ So the Mind Only school that accepts foundational consciousness asserts the appearance of physical sense faculties to foundational consciousness as the physical eye faculty and so on. So having shown how there are no eye faculty and so on that are separate from consciousness, to demonstrate that even visible form does not exist as separate from consciousness they state the following:

⁴¹⁰ MV, *

⁴¹¹ Sthiramati's commentary *

**So here arising from such faculty [emerges] consciousness;
So failing to realize that without apprehending the external
But from its own seed the perception of blue and alike emerges,
People adhere to apprehending of external objects.**

**Just as there emerges in a dream the mind
Possessing the aspect of external objects without their presence
But from the ripening of its own potential, if it's asserted,
That in the waking state too the mind exists without external reality.**

Here in the world, failing to realize that it is through the ripening of the seed of consciousness that has been left upon foundational consciousness and with no external objects perceptions of blue and so on emerge for the five consciousness that emerge from the five senses, [270] people accept, that is manifestly apprehend, these to be external objects. Therefore, there are no external objects realities separate from consciousness.

Another explanation given is this. Just as in dream the mind that assume the aspects of form, sound and so on emerge from the ripening of relevant potentials without there being form and so on of separate reality, during the waking states too the mental faculty exists without there being external reality.

(2') Refuting that standpoint

[If the opponent] argues thus, this is untenable.

**So just as in a dream the mental experience
Of blue and so on emerges without the eyes,
Likewise without the eye faculty and from the ripening
Of its own seed why would not [such cognition] arise in the blind?**

**If, according to you, there is ripening of the potential
For sixth consciousness in a dream and not in [the blind] awake,
Just as the nonexistence of the ripening of sixth here [for the blind],
Why is not logical that it does not exist in dream as well?**

*Two lines missing here.

**Therefore you admit that even in a dream
[this potential] is the cause for cognizing false subjects.
So whatever responses is presented to this,
Since it can be seen that it applies equally to the theses,
This argument is dispelled;**

Just as states of mental consciousness that perceive blue and so on emerge without there being the eye faculty in dream, why would not [cognitions] seeing visible form as the unblind would arise in the blind from the ripening of the consciousness potential without there being eye faculty? For insofar as the absence of eye faculty is concerned the dream

and waking states remain equal. The significance here is that if intrinsically existing consciousness arise without there being external reality like visible form and so on, there will be no difference between dream and waking states.

If [the opponent] thinks that the reason why cognitions of mental consciousness clearly perceiving visible form and so on similar to that of dream do not emerge for the the blind awake is not because of the absence of eyes. What is it then? It is because the potential for the emergence of such mental consciousness has not ripened yet. Therefore for someone in whom such potential has ripened such mental consciousness emerge and that too, due to the condition of sleep, it exists only in dream; it does not exists in the waking state.

This is incorrect. If, as you assert, there is a ripening of the potential for sixth mental consciousness in dream and not during the waking state, in that case, just as there is no ripening of the potential mental consciousness clearly perceiving form and so on for the blind during the waking state, why is it not logical [maintain] that similarly it does not exist in dream [in general]? This is logical. [271] This too is an approach that connects [the argument] with the object of negation. If, however, without reasoning you utter such statements merely in words, we too can speak in the manner we have done earlier.

Because in the seeing of dream one is devoid, just like the blind awake, of an active sense faculty that is the support of consciousness, it is not a mental consciousness that has emerged from the thorough transformation of the ripening of the potential for mental consciousness that follows after the pattern of the consciousness that is contingent upon the sense faculty bearing the name of potential.⁴¹² Therefore, just as the ripening of the disposition for the perception of [external] reality is not a cause for the blind awake, similarly, sleep is not a cause for the ripening of the disposition for the perception of [external] reality in dream. For if intrinsically existing consciousness arises without the existence of external reality, it would not depend upon the ripening of its disposition. Therefore, since it is through unreal dispositions unreal consciousness that perceive the objects of dream arise, you should accept that in dream too, just as in the waking state, the entities of such objects and the consciousness that perceive them as form and so on as unreal and that what is conceived of as the eyes as the cause or the support of such consciousness. In this respect, the commentary states “When an object is determined in dream, it is perceived in terms of the convergence of three [factors].”⁴¹³ Again just [Candrakīrti] states that in dream there are no form-sense-base, the eyes and visual consciousness engendered by these two, although in dream there are no three factors – the object, sense faculty and consciousness – of the five senses, such as visual cognition, within the perspective of the person who is dreaming there does exist the perception of these three. So this indicates that Candrakīrti accepts dream eye, dream visual cognition and dream forms; this does not indicate that he accepts their existence as eyes and so on. [272] This is analogous to the fact although one accepts horses, elephants and humans of magical illusion, this does not entail accepting these to be [actually] horses, elephants and humans. Therefore, whatever responses this [opponent] the Mind Only gives to the

⁴¹² Up to this point, this paragraph is a direct citation from the commentary (p.*).

⁴¹³ MABh, p.*

Madhyamika, they are seen to be [mere] propositions thus equal to unproven theses. Therefore, this argument, that is the pronouncement of the Mind Only, is dispelled or averted.

To illustrate these [points] by means of an example, when the Madhyamika presents the argument that the three factors – the object, sense faculty and consciousness – of the waking state are empty of intrinsic existence, because they are perceived objects, for example, like dream, the Mind Only responds in the following. (1) The consciousness of the waking state is empty of external reality because it is a consciousness; for example, like dream consciousness. (2) The objects perceived during the waking state are false because they are objects; for example, like dream objects. (3) Likewise, if there is no dependent phenomena, which is the basis for the afflicted and enlightened class, the afflicted and the enlightened class do not exist because they will be no support; for example, like a cloak made of turtle hair. Similarly, they respond by means of the analogy of [eyes infected with] cataracts.⁴¹⁴

Of these, as to the first two syllogisms, given that their examples remain unestablished, their reasoning proofs remain the same as their theses. Because in dream there exists the form that is the mental object which is of different entity from the mental consciousness. With respect to the third syllogism, since the desire is to prove an intrinsically existing support of the afflicted and the enlightened class of phenomena, for that the absence of support remains still unestablished. And if the intended [reference is] to an intrinsically existing [dependent phenomena], there is no entailment.

iii') Demonstrating how there is no contradiction with scriptures for refuting the Mind Only standpoint

This is as follows.

**So the Buddhas have taught
That no real entities exist anywhere.**

Not only is the refutation of the Mind Only standpoint unharmed by reason, it is not possible for scriptures to harm this as well. This is because the fully awakened Buddhas [273] have never stated in any of the scriptures that from their standpoint there exist real entities. For example, the *Descent into Laṅkā* states:

The three worlds are mere imputations;
There are no entities by virtue of essence;
What are imputed as real entities,
So conceives the logicians.

There is no intrinsic nature nor consciousness;

⁴¹⁴ This paragraph presenting the Mind Only's three arguments rejecting external reality while establishing the intrinsic reality of dependent phenomena – namely, consciousness – represents a close paraphrase of Candrakīrti's commentary. (See MABh, p.*)

If there is no foundational consciousness and real entities,
The base childish the logicians,
Who resemble corpses postulate these.⁴¹⁵

The first line presents the three worlds existing as mere imputations of the mind, while the second line presents the meaning of this. Since this, in turn, is explained in terms of nonexistence entities that exist by virtue of an essence, it states that they do not exist by virtue of an essence; this indicates that it is not the case that there are no entities at all. That the logicians who fail to find the meaning of suchness assert what are imputed by the mind as existing by virtue of an essence is indicated by the two usages of the term “imputation.” Explaining in specific terms the general point of how there is nothing that exists by virtue of an essence, here the term *rŌpa*, which refers to both intrinsic nature and form, is taken to mean matter. This is due to the force of the term being contrasted with “consciousness.” The term “entity” in the context of “no entities” here refers to, given that the absence of cognitions and material objects has already been mentioned, an essence. This too it refers to the essence of the negation of real entities and other absence of true existence of entities. The way in which [the logicians] resemble corpses is that they lack the mind capable of probing into suchness. This citation refutes the assertion that the dependent phenomena of the three worlds possess intrinsic existence.

One might have the thought “Since these scriptural citations present how one, the dependent, is empty of the other, the imputed which is the emptiness of subject and object substance duality, so they do not undermine [the Mind Only standpoint].” Such [characterization] is not suited to be the perfect emptiness [274] for the *Descent into La’ka* states “Great intelligent one, the emptiness of one being absent in another is a most inferior among all forms of emptiness.”⁴¹⁶ The argument that “Because an oxen is empty of being a horse, it is no an existent” is illogical because, [for you, the opponent], it does exist by virtue of its own reality.⁴¹⁷ So one should argue states [Candrakīrti] in the commentary.

“By virtue of its own reality” is translated by Naktsō as “its own reality exists,” which is a better [reading]. The reason how the emptiness of one being absent in the other resembles the analogy is this. The Blessed One’s teaching of emptiness of the absence of intrinsic existence is for the purpose of averting the beginningless manifest clinging of the sentient beings at entities, such as form, as true existence. For this it is necessary to demonstrate how the dependent, which is perceived in terms of form and so on, is not established as true existence. Instead of demonstrating this, when this dependent as being of subject-object substance duality is shown to be untrue, this is like stating the oxen does not exist as a horse as a reason for the nonexistence of oxens.

Therefore, in any of the two systems – be it the Middle Way or the Mind Only – in so far as the basis for manifest clinging by the sentient beings is concerned, there is no

⁴¹⁵ *La’ok>vat>ra*, Kangyur, *

⁴¹⁶ *La’ok>vat>ra*, Kangyur, *

⁴¹⁷ This citation of the *Descent into La’ka* sutra as well the subsequent sentences in the paragraph are from Candrakīrti’s commentary. (See p. *)

difference that this is taken to be those very facts that are perceived as outer and inner phenomena. It is also the same that the reason why these are demonstrated to be empty is for the purpose of averting manifest clinging upon these bases. However, as to how they are clung there is a difference [between the two]. According the Mind Only it is the subject and object, which appear as separated in terms of the outer and the inner, that are clung to in terms of subject-object substance duality. For its antidote this [world of] dependent is taken as the subject [of enquiry] and negated as existing in terms of subject-object substance duality. [275] So this basis of negation is negated as being that object of negation. According to the Middle Way, however, the manner is which [the sentient beings] cling is that apprehend the appearances not as posited by conventions but as true existence. And for its antidote this very [world of] appearance is taken as the subject and is negated as not existing truly. This too is a negation of the basis of negation as being that object of negation. This is because when sentient beings cling [at phenomena] they do not do so in terms of some other externaneous object of negation to be present upon that basis; rather they grasp at that basis in terms of that object of negation. Therefore, the emptiness too must be demonstrated in terms of how the way in which [the thing in question] is apprehended empty of such existence. So those who take this emptiness of true existence of the present bases of perceptions as a nihilistic emptiness and, forsaking these [bases of perception, namely the world of everyday experience], take some other kind of appearance as the basis of emptiness and demonstrating them to be empty – not in terms of identity relation – in terms of there being no entities, this is not an approach of either the Middle Way or the Mind Only. Whether such grasping at object of negation exists amongst the beginningless clinging of the sentient beings, this you should examine by turning your mind inward.

Therefore, it appears that we are at a time when what the glorious Dharmakīrti has stated in the following

For this [Buddha's way] too there are some who object;
So the evil darkness pervade everywhere.⁴¹⁸

in proliferating greatly. This those with discerning intelligence should be cognizant of.

Here, in the *Meeting of Father and Son sutra* that presents the twenty two faculties as absent of intrinsic existence, which is cited in the commentary, it states “They are thus bound to be imputed as names; ultimately, the eye faculty is not perceived” and “Likewise, all phenomena too are, in terms of their essence, nowhere to be perceived.”⁴¹⁹ Thus the phenomena are taught to be mere imputations as names and that ultimately and in terms of their essence they are nowhere to be found. Therefore, in qualifying the object of negation these two are used as [equivalent] synonyms [276] and all the standpoints of one's own presentations are done so in terms of mere imputations of names. With respects to the objects of love and play in a dream, even in the dream when one fails to find them and wakes up, what need is there to speak of [not finding them afterwards]. There are many statements similar to this. Therefore those who assert that there is no

⁴¹⁸ PV, *

⁴¹⁹ Give both sutra and MABh. p.*

difference insofar as whether one is a human being or not between a dream person and a person [perceived] during the waking state is utterly incorrect. [Candrakīrti] is stating that those beings who are partners in the acts of love and play cannot be found as such sentient beings even in the dream state; however, one will have to accept that they can be found so during the waking state. Therefore one should recognize that the assertion that in this [Candrakīrti's] tradition sensory consciousness, such as visual experience, exist in dream is a grave error. So the attempts of the Mind Only, who lack the wisdom skill to realize the ultimate definitive meaning, to lead [others] to their tenets deserves only to be dispelled.

c') Demonstrating how such rejection and meditation on foulness are not inconsistent

This is as follows.

**The the skeletons that fill the earth
Which a yogi see son the basis of teacher's instruction,
Here too all the three factors are not seen;
For it's described as mentation of false objects.**

**Just as the objects of your sense cognitions,
If the awareness of foulness meditation too is the same,
Then other person who directs his mind too
Will cognize so it would not be false.**

**Resembling the senses infected with cataracts
Is also hungry ghost's perception of puss in a flowing stream.**

One might have the following thought: "If, with no external objects, no intrinsically real cognition exist that perceive form, sound and so on clearly with no external objects exists, then how can the seeing of the ground being filled with skeletons by those yogis who, on the basis of their teacher's instruction, meditate on foulness [of the body] remain tenable? So, although such skeletons do not exist, intrinsically real consciousness exists."

Even in this case where the yogis meditating on foulness see, through their teacher's instruction, the ground being filled with skeletons too, one can perceive all three factors – the object, the sense faculty and consciousness – to be devoid of intrinsic arising. Such meditative absorption is described in the sutras as attending to false or what is not true reality. If the cognition that perceives the skeletons were to exist intrinsically, its perceptions too would be the same and it will become [a state of mind] that attends to what is a true reality. This one should admit without any apprehension. [277] If this is not the case, then when you look at a spectacle like a play, just as from the directing of the eyes to that object a visual experience that assumes the aspects of that object arises to one person, [visual experience] with similar aspects arise also for other spectators as well, in the same manner, just as the yogi with consciousness of foulness, others, that is those who are not yogis [yet] directs their mind to the object –that is the perceived skeletons – namely, those who wish to see such an object, they must cognize skeletons, that is the

cognition seeing the skeletons should arise [as well]. For example, like cognitions of blue and so on. Here, if we consult the commentary, it seems that another translation, such as the following, could be found:

Just like the objects you attend to with your sensory cognitions,
Likewise with respect to awareness of foulness too,
For those others who direct their mind to it as well,
This will arise and it'll not be false as well.

So this meditative absorption will not be then attending to false object. The signification of drawing equivalence between yogis and non-yogis is that if cognition exists intrinsically one can refute its dependence upon meditating upon the instruction of [visualizing] skeletons. Likewise, one should know how to respond to the citation of [other] analogies that resemble the possession of sense faculties infected with cataracts, such as illusion, mirror reflections. With respect to the arising of the perception of puss and blood upon a stream of flowing water too, one should know [how to respond] as above.

Here, the five mental object forms are not [merely] imputed by philosophical schools that propound real entities.⁴²⁰ They are mentioned in the sutras as well and they are accepted by [Candrakīrti] himself too. Therefore, the clear appearance of skeletons even though no such skeletons exist must be accepted as a form, just like the mirror reflection. [278] Since this appears only to mental consciousness, it is not a visible form like a mirror reflection. Neither is it any of the remaining nine form-bases so it is referred to as “an imputed mental object form.” As for the perception of a stream as puss and blood by the hungry ghost, given that it is being perceived by his eye consciousness, it must be posited as a visible form. The *Summary of the Great Vehicle* too states:

To the hungry ghosts, animals and the humans,
And to the gods in commensurate with their kind,
Since one entity [gives rise to] different cognitions,
We accept that [external] reality is not established.⁴²¹

Here, in the *Summary of the Great Vehicle* what is that single entity and how it is perceived differently are not clearly explained. In the interlaced explanation composed by the lay practitioner Asvabhava states the following:

With relation to the entity, that is the river stream, due to the fruitional effects of their karma, the hungry ghosts see it as being filled with puss and blood. To this, the animals like fish retain awareness of it as a habitat, while the humans, conceiving it as sweet, clear and cooling stream, they washing themselves with it, they drink it and enter in it. The celestial beings abiding in the absorption of

⁴²⁰ List the five mental objects forms from Asanga's *Compendium of Higher Knowledge*, p.*

⁴²¹ *Mahāyānaśāstra*, Tengyur, sems tsam, *

infinite space perceive it as space for they have dismantled perceptions of matter.⁴²²

With respect to this, one might raise the following objection: “The sights of these beings are valid conventional cognitions. So if one basis is established by valid cognitions as these conflicting facts, then what is puss and blood and what is not puss and blood will become not contradictory. Furthermore, there will be no reliability to what has been established by valid cognition.”

Here, if the question is “If one understands the meaning of the text in such terms valid cognitions becomes unreliable, given that this cannot be so how does one [understand this text]?”, this is indeed a question of an intelligent person. [279] If, however, taking this understanding to be the meaning of this [text], one asserts that there is no reliability to the valid cognitions, one will not be able to posit a single thing that one can say “I have realized this.” One will denigrate all valid cognitions so this is utterly incorrect. So, the question is “What is it then?” First I shall cite an analogy.

[For example] when a person who possesses the mantra spell for not being burnt even when touching a red burning metal ball picks up that metal ball with his hand, although his tactile perception apprehends the texture of that metal ball, that texture does not arise as an extremely hot temperature. This is due to his hand being washed by the water [enchanted by] mantra recitation. To those who lack such mantra recitation the texture of that metal ball will arise in the form of an extremely hot temperature. In that case, both the burning texture and non-burning textures will have to be accepted as textures of that same single metal ball. Yet, the texture that is established by one tactile experience is not established by the other. So even though one accepts both experiences to be valid it is not that what is established by one is negated by the other. Similarly, the site where a stream flows, there one dimension of the stream arises as puss and blood due to the power of the karma of the hungry ghosts, while one dimension of the stream, not appearing as puss and blood, arises due to the power of the humans as water for drinking or washing. When these [different facts] arise, both of them are dimensions of one and the same stream yet the facts established by the eye consciousness of the hungry ghosts and that of the humans are different entities. Therefore how can be that what is established by one is established as the total opposite by the other? Similarly, what *Friendly Letter* states in the following: [280]

For the hungry ghosts even in the fall,
The moon is hot and the sun remains cold.⁴²³

describes that due to the power of their past karma, for the hungry ghosts, the moon gives rise to extremely hot temperature while in winter the temperature of sun arises as cold. Yet it is not contradictory that on the basis of the temperature of sun and moon they arise [correctly] as hot and cold to the humans. It is not the case that with respect to these two the very temperature, namely the hot temperature, which was experienced by one is being

⁴²² *Theg bsdus bshad sbyar*, Tengyur, sems tsam, *

⁴²³ *bshes springs*, Tengyur, *

experienced as cold by the other. Yet both of these are posited to be the temperature of one and same sun or moon. Because of the use of the expression “one entity,” when a rough understanding dawns without a more refined analysis of the meaning of the text, pray do not be hasty in arriving at a conclusion.

2’) Concluding the refutation by means of summary

This is as follows.

**In brief, recognize this fact that just as there exists
No cognizable objects cognition too does not exist.**

To summarize the points explained extensively before, [Candrakīrti] states this: “You [the Mind Only] should understand that just as there is no intrinsically existing objects to be cognized, similarly, there is no cognition that has arisen by means of its own reality that takes on the aspect of such objects.” So he shows how there is no difference between cognition and the cognizable object insofar as their intrinsic existence or the lack of it is concerned. Therefore such assertions as “If there is no falling hair there is no cognition that perceives it” and “If there is no apprehended object of [the mind] apprehending magical illusion as horses and elephants the mind that grasps at them too does not exist” are definitely not the position of master [Candrakīrti]. *Hymns to the World Transcended* too states:

That which is unknown is not cognizable;
Without it there is no consciousness;
Therefore both the cognizable and cognition,
You taught them to be devoid of intrinsic existence.⁴²⁴

And:

That consciousness is like an illusion,
This Suryamitra has taught;
It’s object too is likewise
Definitely resembling an illusory thing.⁴²⁵

If one cannot posit it as being known such type of cognition, [281] it cannot be defined as an object of knowledge. So this [stanza] demonstrates that without describing it as knowing such and such object even a cognition cannot be posited; so without the cognizable object consciousness too would not exist. In that cognition and the cognizable are mutually defined, [Nāgārjuna] states that you [the Buddha] taught them to be devoid of intrinsic existence. Therefore, it is the position of Noble Nāgārjuna that there is no distinction between these two in terms of their existence or nonexistence on either of the two levels of truth. *Commentary on the Awakening Mind* states:

⁴²⁴ ‘jig rten las ‘das par bstod pa, Tengyur, bstod tshogs, p.*

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p.*

The cognizant perceives the cognizable;
Without the cognizable there is no cognition;⁴²⁶

This statement too is similar to the earlier citation from the hym so it represents an authoritative basis for [the assertion of] equation between [external] reality and cognition insofar as their existence or nonexistence is concerned.

b” Refutation of the proofs for the intrinsic existence of dependent phenomena

This has four parts:

- i” Refuting self-awareness as the proof of dependent phenomena
- ii” Demonstrating how the Mind Only standpoint falls short of both the two truths
- iii” Therefore it is worthy to follow after Nṅgṛjuna alone
- iv” How the negation of dependent phenomena is dissimilar to [negating] worldly convention

The first four parts:

- 1’) Asking for the proof of dependent phenomena and showing how it is untenable
- 2’) Refuting the opponent’s response that it is tenable
- 3’) Demonstrating through other arguments how self-cognizing awareness is untenable
- 4’) Demonstrating how intrinsically existing dependent phenomena is similar to the son of a barren woman

The first is as follows. Having demonstrated how it is impossible for there to be a consciousness without external reality, now to refute an intrinsically existing entity itself that is a dependent phenomenon, not qualified with the nonexistence of external reality, the following is stated:

**If there is no object and [subject] is devoid of duality,
So the dependent phenomena devoid of duality really exists,
By what means is its existence known?
Without apprehending it you cannot say it exists.**

Its own experience of itself does not exist.

If, because there is external object of apprehension one is deprived of a subject that is of different reality from it, and if there exists a dependent entity that is empty of subject-object substance duality, we shall then ask “With respect to the existence of such dependent phenomena, [282] through means of what valid cognition you know this?”

Now, it is untenable for that very cognition to apprehend itself because it is a contradiction for something to have its own act directed upon itself. For example, the blade of a sword does not cut itself and the tip of one’s nail does not touch itself; even a

⁴²⁶ *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, 39 ab.

well-trained athlete who is flexible cannot sit astride upon his own shoulders; fire does not burn itself and the eyes do not look at themselves. As for a unique standpoint of another [master] that explains how it is untenable for a cognition to apprehend itself, I shall explain this later.⁴²⁷

The cognition is not apprehended by another cognition of different reality for this is in contradiction to the Mind Only's own tenets. For the following is found in the texts of the Mind Only school:

During the stage when the transformation of state into a result has not been attained, if another consciousness of different reality is the appearing object of consciousness, then the assertion of mind only will be undermined.⁴²⁸

Therefore, according to the Mind Only, such apprehension does not exist at all. So when the Madhyamika makes the assertion "It is inappropriate to say that something exists without it being apprehended by a cognition," the Mind Only responds thus: "Although it is not apprehended by a cognition that is of different reality, there is self-cognition. Therefore this self-cognizing awareness alone that apprehends the dependent phenomena so it exists." If they defend thus, [the Madhyamika responds} "That it is experienced by the cognition itself is not established."

Here to explain briefly what kind of self-cognizing awareness is asserted by the Mind Only, the *Blaze of Reasoning* states:

The Mind Only asserts that consciousness appears as twofold: that which perceives the object and that which perceives itself. The consciousness that perceives objects [283] takes on the aspects of the external objects and becomes an object of the consciousness that perceives itself.⁴²⁹

In response to this, he writes:

Apart from the perception of the objects,
What kind of mind can be perceived?⁴³⁰

Thus he states that apart from or divorced of the perception of objects I do not see [any cognition] that perceives itself. So the Mind Only asserts an inward focusing cognition for which all dualistic perceptions has ceased and this they accept as a self-cognizing apercceptive awareness. This being so, they assert, within the perspective of that cognition there is no perception of duality of the awared [the object] and that which is aware [the cognition]. In the autocommentary to *The Two Truths* too, when refuting self-cognizing awareness, it states:

⁴²⁷ Jñānagarbha ?

⁴²⁸ *theg bsdus? don gsang ?* or MV commentary?

⁴²⁹ *Tarkajvala*, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁴³⁰ Ibid., p.*

Cognition emerges in terms of the awareness of reality that is empty of [subject-object] duality; so it will be known without the existence of such [duality]. Otherwise, this will be untenable.⁴³¹

Thus when the Mind Only establishes the dependent phenomena to be devoid of the imputed nature of subject-object substance duality, the dependent nature, which is the cognition, is established by self-cognizing awareness that emerges through the awareness of the absence of dualistic appearances and that basis is recognized as not existing in terms of a subject-object substance duality. However if that basis is not established by the self-cognizing awareness, then taking that as the basis and establishing it as being devoid of the imputed nature is not feasible. This is what they assert. So he [Jñānagarbha] refutes by asserting that, according to you [the Mind Only], the dependent phenomena must be established by its proof, which is the self-cognizing awareness that is devoid of dualistic perception, this, however, is not established. Some assert that by refuting this type of self-cognizing awareness one also refutes yogi's reflexive gnosis whereby suchness is cognized in terms of one's own individual [unique] experience and that it refutes reflexive awareness that is the referent of the worldly convention when one speaks of "I am aware of myself." These assertions are, therefore, foolish talk.

2') Refuting the opponent's response that it is tenable

This has two parts:

- a') Stating the opponent's standpoint
- b') Refuting that standpoint

The first is this. Here, some, namely the Mind Only, [284] adhering to a Sautrantika thesis and to prove self-cognizing awareness assert the following. For example, when a flame arises, it does not operate to illuminate first itself and then [other objects like] vase and so on in a sequential dual manner but illuminates in a simultaneous way. When one utters the word "This is a vase," it engenders [an awareness] that focuses on the sound itself and one focusing on the vase, which is its content, similarly, when consciousness arises it does not operate in a sequential dual manner; rather it becomes aware of both itself and its object. Therefore, self-cognizing awareness definitely exists. Even those who do not accept self-cognizing awareness will have to admit its existence. For if they do not accept this there cannot be the subsequent recollection of the object in terms of "This I have seen" and the recollection of the subjective experience of seeing the object in terms of "I have seen this." Why is this so? Because it is impossible for there to be a recollection of something that has not been experienced before. So given that remembering is a subjective experience of what has been experienced in the past, according to you who do not accept self-cognizing awareness, since the past cognition of blue object, for instance, was not experienced at its time, its subsequent recollection will not be established. This is [an argument] whereby the existence of the experience of the blue apprehending [cognition] is being established through its recollection as the proof. For if the proof is presented in the form of "there is a self-experience to that past

⁴³¹ *bden gnis rang 'grel*, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

cognition of blue,” given that no example can be found that is approved by the opponent, this is not how they [attempt to] prove.

Once the existence of experience for that cognition of blue has been established, its experience is then confined to experience by itself or experience by some other [cognition]. As for the first, they argue, it is not possible for you [those who reject self-cognizing awareness]. When the second is rejected within their own standpoint, they then argue that the generality, experience [itself], becomes negated so even the mere experience [of that cognition] becomes untenable. This is how they refute [their opponent]. This is by far the best argument to prove self-cognizing awareness.

It is not tenable for that cognition of blue to be experienced by some other cognition. [286] For if it is tenable, there are two objects. Of these, the first the infinite regress objection is the following. If the cognition that explicitly cognizes blue is explicitly cognized by another subsequent cognition, does that [cognition] require another cognition as its cognizer or not? If not, then the previous too would not require this. If it does require, it too would require another cognition and so there will be the fault of infinite regress. If there is infinite regress then there will be the flaw of the experience of the first cognition never being established. The second [objection], there will be the consequence that it will not explicitly cognize other object is this. If the preceding cognition cognizes the subsequent cognition, it will not cognize or move to other objects, such as form, sound and so on. This is because the continuum of consciousness, that is all of its movements, will become subjects that take on their preceding moments as their object. It is not the case that there is no invariability here. For if the preceding cognitions are explicitly cognized by the subsequent cognitions, then it is on the basis of taking the preceding cognition as its held object that the subsequent cognition has to arise. At that point, it will not forsake the closer held object, which is the inner fact, and engage with external objects that is farther. If one opines that because the subsequent cognition of blue that cognizes the preceding cognition of blue and the consciousness that cognizes blue arise together, there is no flaw of it not moving to other objects. In that case, two instances of eye consciousness, which belong to the same class of consciousness but are distinct in terms of their substances, will arise at one time within the mental continuum of a single person. If this is accepted, this will contradict the statement “The continuum of the consciousness of the sentient beings is singular, they are of each continuum.”⁴³²

Here the commentary states “The consciousnesses that arise in sequence like the piercing of hundred petals of a lotus [by an arrow] appear as if they engage simultaneously.”⁴³³ The *Explanation of the Commentary* interprets this in the following. In response to the question “When someone enters a dancing hall do not the five consciousnesses apprehending the five [sense] objects arise simultaneously?,” [the commentary states] that although the consciousnesses that apprehend the five objects arise sequentially because of the speed of their engagement they appear as if they arise at the same time.⁴³⁴ This is utterly incorrect. The Sautrantika and the Mind Only, who seek to prove self-

⁴³² Check Geluk Tsema volume.

⁴³³ MABh, p.*

⁴³⁴ 'grel bshad, Tengyur, dbu ma, p*

cognizing awareness, understand the meaning of the statement “The continuum of the sentient being’s consciousness is singular” in terms of the following as [explained] in the *Exposition of Valid Cognition*:

It’s on the basis of similar classes
Their potentials can be determined.⁴³⁵

So understand this [statement] in terms of consciousnesses of the same class do not arise simultaneously in a single person. It is definitely not the case that they do not accept the simultaneous arising of different classes of consciousness.

Some Tibetans interpret this [sentence from the commentary] in the following way. In response to the question “When one looks at a colorful brocade do not many instances of cognition that apprehend white, red and so on arise at the same time?” although these cognitions arise sequentially they seem as if they arise simultaneously. Those who assert this have failed to understand that the meaning of the statement “The continuum of consciousness is singular” is that it is intended to mean primary consciousness that belong to the same class. They have also failed understand that a single instance of eye consciousness apprehends a multitude of colors and they also appear to have failed to realize [that there exists] eye cognitions that apprehend multi-color [objects]. Therefore, in responding to the objection that [several distinct instances of] consciousness of the same class will arise, it seems as if one has to interpret this [statement in commentary] as stating that because of the speed of their engagement though they arise sequentially they seem as if they arise simultaneously. Although this how it seems that the fast pace of engagement is a cause for confusion of simultaneity has been rejected in the *Exposition of Valid Cognition* so this is difficult to posit as the standpoint of these two texts. [287] Most probably this is a corruption of the Indian text; anyway, those with discerning intelligence must examine this. Therefore, in order to avoid the flaws of infinite regress and not cognizing other objects one will have accept without doubt self-cognizing awareness. So from the arising of the recollection of both the object and subject they infer the existence of the experience of the object and its subject at the time of seeing blue. This then is the reply given to the question raised by the Madhyamika “If there exists self-cognizing awareness that is the experience of itself, the existence of dependent nature will be established by that self-cognition; however, by what means does one know the existence of that [self-cognizing awareness]?”

b’) Refuting that standpoint

This has three parts:

- i’) The actual refutation of the opponent’s standpoint
- ii’) How in one’s system recollection arises even though there is no self-cognition
- iii’) Repudiation of the objections for refuting this

The first is as follows.

⁴³⁵ PV, Tengyur, tshad ma, p.*

**If it's established on the basis of its subsequent recollection,
That which is cited is prove what is not established,
As it's no established this not a [valid] proof.**

**Even if self-cognition is allowed,
Even then the recollection of the recollected is untenable;
As they're different it'll be like arising [of memory] in the unknowing.
This reasoning undoes other variations of [arguments] as well.**

If it is within the framework of an intrinsically real substance that from a subsequent recollection the self-cognition of the preceding cognition, that is the object of recollection, is being established, then the nonestablishment of the intrinsic existence of recollection that is cited to prove what has not been established for the opponent, namely self-cognition, this cannot prove self-cognizing awareness. This is like [the proof of being] the held object of eye consciousness to prove sound as impermanent. If, however, it is within the framework of worldly convention, the recollection that is the result of self-cognizing awareness does not exist. Why is this so? This is because just as if fire is established [first] then smoke can be recognized as its effect, likewise, if self-cognizing awareness is established [the causal] relation of recollection emerging from this can be established. In that case, one can ascertain self-cognition from recollection. However, given that such self-cognition remains still unestablished for the opponent, how can there be the recollection that emerges by means of a necessary relation as the effect of such self-cognizing awareness? The analogy for the fact that without such relation it cannot be established is that from mere seeing of water [288] or fire one cannot infer [the presence of] water crystal gem or fire crystal. For even without these two water and fire emerge from rain and so on and from the striking of **hard dry wood**. Similarly, here too, how even though there is no self-cognizing awareness recollection arises will be explained later.

In response to this refutation, they might assert that it is not that self-cognition is being inferred from recollection on the basis of establishing recollection and self-cognition as cause and effect in the fashion of fire and smoke. Rather, as explained earlier, one infers the existence of experience for the preceding cognition from its recollection and when such experience is confined to self-experience and experience by other and [the latter is] refuted, this establishes the existence of one's experience of itself. Although they might defend in this manner, the awareness by cognition is not limited to these two as defined by Sautrantika and the Mind Only. For example, just as although the lamp does not illuminate itself this does not negate it being an illumination, similarly, although cognition does not experience itself in the manner asserted by the opponent, experience *per se* is not negated upon it.

If they assert that the lamp illuminates itself, in that case darkness will obscure itself, and if this is accepted, then just as one cannot see a vase in the darkness one would not see the darkness as well. This is as stated in the following in the *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*:

For if the lamp illumines
Itself and other things,
There is no doubt that darkness too
Will obscure itself and other things.⁴³⁶

Even if one allows that cognition cognizes its own self and the objects, it is illogical for that remembering mind to remember the object and its subject for you have accepted the two mental events – that is the subsequent remembering mind and the preceding cognition that is the experience of the object – to be [289] intrinsically existing different. So just as Upagupta's cognitions do not recollect the self-cognition and object experience of Maitreya because he has not experienced them before, like those that have arisen in the mental continuum those who have not cognized it before, they are intrinsically different. So even those subsequent events of consciousness that emerge within the same shared mental continuum, as they do not experience the cognition and its object, they will not remember them. If one thinks that because there exists the reality of cause and effect in those that belong to the shared single continuum recollection does exist, this too is untenable. Because this reasoning "because they are intrinsically different" undermines all specific characteristics as belonging to the shared single continuum, cause and effect and so on.

ii') How in one's system recollection arises even though there is no self-cognition

This has two parts:

- (1') The tradition presented in this text
- (2') The tradition presented in other texts

The first is as follows.

**Because other than recollecting the experience of
The experienced object I do not have other [recollection],
So the recollection occurs "I saw that."
This too within the mode of worldly convention.**

If asked "What then is the manner in which recollection arises for you who do not accept self-cognizing awareness?" I [Candrakīrti] have already explained earlier how a remembering cognition that is intrinsically separate from the cognition that experiences the object of the prior cognition does not exist in their system. I have also already explained how there is no apprehension of substantial cause and its effect, such as the seed and sprout, as being separate by virtue of their own characteristics within everyday ordinary worldly mind. So with respect to the cause and effect relation between the prior object experience and the subsequent recollection as well, there is no apprehension within the innate worldly mind of these being separate by virtue of their own characteristics. Not only does such apprehension not exist, [290] when what was seen by the prior cognition of blue is remembered, the convention is used "I have seen this before too." This clearly

⁴³⁶ MMK, *

reveals, therefore, that there is no apprehension of the experience and its recollection [on the one hand] and their two [respective] objects are being different by virtue of their own characteristics. If this is not the case, then one could have recollection with regard to other's experience as well. Therefore, since it is not the case that what has been experienced and cognized by the cognition that experienced the object is not experienced and cognized by the subsequent recollection, the recollection "This, I have seen before as well" could arise. This too is within the framework of worldly convention. It should not be posited, not being satisfied with mere designation, in the manner of searching for a true referent of the designation. It is [part of] the worldly convention that is false and could not be found when searched for the true referent of designations.

In the autocommentary, after refuting self-cognition and recollection that exists as substances by virtue of their own characteristics, it states "If it is from the perspective of worldly convention, even then a recollection that is caused by self-cognizing awareness remains impossible."⁴³⁷ Thus not only on the ultimate level, even on the conventional level, self-cognizing awareness is negated. It then states "How, without self-cognizing awareness, recollection emerges will be explained thus."⁴³⁸

The [Mind Only] reflect in the following manner. The recollection "*I* have seen it" is a recollection of the subjective experience, while "I saw *this* blue [object]" is a recollection of the object. The recollection "I remember what I have myself seen in the past" is a special case of recollection. When this kind of recollection emerges, it is clear that the prior cognition, for example, the subjective experience that perceived Maitreya, has experienced itself. Because recollection follows after the exact pattern of the experience.

Our own standpoint is that although [291] one accepts such mode of recollection as it appears to the worldly perspective, the occurrence of such recollection is not due to the prior experience of the object cognizes itself. Because the very object cognized by the prior cognition is being cognized by the recollection thus they share the same object, the recollection occurs "I have seen this person Maitreya before as well." So even we accept conventions such as "I myself remember what I saw myself before." Yet, although we accept this, how this differs from self-cognizing awareness that is negated should be understood on the basis of this [explanation] as well. In the opponent's system, since they posit the experience and its recollection as well as their two objects as different by virtue of self-defining characteristics, so even though they may accept the experience and its recollection as sharing the same object and that these two belong to the same single mental continuum, that this they cannot posit has already been explained numerous times before.

Although one speaks of "This Maitreya" that one does not hold the thought "I saw this Maitreya" as qualified in terms of a specific time, such as the time of utterance of the sentence, and a specific location where you are and so on. Rather one takes Maitreya alone [as the object]. That this is so can be discerned by observing one's own mind.

⁴³⁷ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴³⁸ Ibid., p.*

(2') The approach presented in other texts

Of the two great traditions that exist on how recollection can arise without there being self-cognizing awareness, the tradition of glorious /antideva is as follows. *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* states:

If there is no self-cognizing awareness,
How can there be recollection of consciousness?⁴³⁹

The standpoint of the opponent of this [stanza] is the one that has been discussed extensively earlier. Given that [/antideva] responds both to the opponent's consequence and its opposite as lacking entailment, the question then is "How, although there is no self-cognizing awareness, does recollection arise?"

When a cognition that takes on a held object that is other than subjective cognition is experienced, it is from the cognition that experiences the object the recollection of the subjective experience, namely the consciousness, occurs. If, the opponent asserts, the arising of the recollection of subjective experience [292] from the experience of the object is untenable, otherwise absurd consequences will follow.

There is no such danger because when recollection of the experience of the object arises, it does not do so divorced of cognition; rather it arises in terms of the thought "Earlier I saw this form" on the basis of interrelatedness of the object and its subjective experience, that is they are remembered in a fused manner. This is similar to the following example. When during winter one is bitten by a rat the poison has entered one's body at that point one experiences being bitten but not the entry of the poison. Later, however, when one hears the sound of thunder although one comes to remember that poison entered one's body when one was bitten, in the past one did not experience the poison. Here, being bitten by a rat resembles the perception of blue experiencing its object; the entering of poison at the same time as being bitten resembles the subjective experience at the time of the experience of the object; that the subject did not experience itself is similar to the lack of experience of poison at the time of being bitten; while subsequent recollection of being bitten is analogous to the recollection of the experience of the object. That the recollection of the experience of the object itself led to the recollection of the prior experience even though it not experience itself, this is analogous to the recollection of being bitten leading to recollection of the entering of the poison even though it was not experienced before.

This seems to be a most excellent argument developed by a learned master on how recollection occurs even though there is no self-cognizing awareness. Those who engaged in the explanation of *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* do not appeared to have explored this well. This [approach] responds to the question "Is not recollection by subsequent cognition tenable, because the prior consciousness did not experience itself" with there being no entailment. Therefore, those who interpret the intention of *Guide to*

⁴³⁹ BCA, 6:*

the Bodhisattva's Way of Life in terms of not rejecting self-cognizing awareness on the conventional level does not definitely represent the great bodhisattva's view.

iii') Repudiation of the objections for refuting this

This has two parts:

(1') Repudiation of objections pertaining to other direct perceptions and inferential cognition

(2') Repudiation of objections pertaining to other mental cognitions [293]

The first is as follows. In our own system one will have to accept the existence of cognitions such as perception of blue. In that case, [the question could be raised] "Just as you have levelled objections against the opponent with the lines "*By what means is its existence known?/Without apprehending it you cannot say it exists*/" the same faults apply to you as well. For if that perception of blue cognizes its own existence you will have to accept self-cognition and it being known by another cognition is untenable."

This certainly is an extremely difficult question so let me explain [a little]. This will be easier to understand if it is explained on the basis of citing analogies for the manner in which objects and subjective experiences are remembered. Here, just as the recollection of object itself involves recollection of the subjective experience so there is no need for separate recollection of the subject, so the establishment of the experience, such as perception of blue for example, the cognizer of blue is established; so apart from the process by which the blue [object] is established there is no need for a separate process for the establishment of the cognizer of blue object. That the dawning of the likeness aspect projected by the blue [object] to the perception of blue in itself establishes the blue [object], this is the same as other schools. The difference is that the other schools maintain that when the perception of blue is established it is done so by means of a self-cognizing awareness, that is a mere subjective aspect free of dualistic appearances, which, they assert, remains true of all other cognitions as well. Here, however, as stated in the *Essence of the Middle Way* and the root text and commentary of *The Two Truths*, it is maintained that such mere subjective aspect is impossible. So [perception of blue] is not established by such self-cognizing awareness; rather the establishment of blue itself establishes the perception of blue. This is analogous to, for example, through the recollection of the object itself its subjective experience is remembered; it is not that such recollection occurs because the prior subject experienced itself in a manner asserted by others. That this is how it should be interpreted is stated extremely clearly in the following in the *Clear Words*: [294]

The numerical division of valid cognition is due to the power of the object of knowledge. It is through simply following after the aspect of the object of cognition their identity is obtained and thus the identity of the valid cognitions are defined.⁴⁴⁰

⁴⁴⁰ PSP, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

The meaning of these sentences is this. The division of valid cognitions into two is defined by the fact that the object of cognition is determined into two [classes]. It is through the dawning of the aspect of the object of cognition to the valid cognition that the existence of the identity of the valid cognizer is posited. The significance of the exclusive term “simply” is to reject, as asserted by Sautrantika and the Mind Only, that because the valid cognition follows after the pattern of the aspect of the object the object is established. Then the manner in which the valid cognition is established is, apart from the previous process, it is established by a self-cognizing awareness that experiences a mere subjective aspect that is free of dualistic appearances. The point [of this exclusive term] is indicate that [the valid cognition] is established through the mere establishment of the object. This is the intention of the following statement by Noble Nāgārjuna himself:

If the valid cognition is established by itself,
 So this established valid cognition of yours
 Which does not depend upon objects of cognition,
 Without dependent upon others it'll be self-established.⁴⁴¹

If, as asserted by the opponent, the establishment of the object is not adequate for the establishment of the valid cognition and that valid cognition is established by itself, then valid cognition will be established without depending upon the object of cognition. If this is accepted, then the entities will be established as not dependent upon other causes and conditions. Since this is how it is being refuted, that the establishment of the object of cognition itself establishes the valid cognition is indicated by way of implication. Therefore the perception of blue is not established by self-cognizing awareness as asserted by others; it is demonstrated as being established by the valid sensory perception. Because its existence is realized through the perception of blue's cognition of its own object. [295] Therefore, all instances of valid cognitions are established by the establishment of their respective objects.

(2') Repudiation of objections pertaining to other mental cognitions

In this system mirror reflections, reflected sounds and so on are, as explained before, accepted as visible form and sound and so on, also in the *Clear Words*, with the statement “The double moon and so on are, in relation to the cognitions not affected by cataracts, are direct perception; however, in relation to those who possess cataracts, it is direct perception alone,” it presents the term “direct perception” as an actual noun to the objects, such as form, sound and so on, while to the subjects that apprehend them it is an imputed noun. In this context, [Candrakīrti] explains that although with respect to the perception of double moon there is a difference from the point of view ordinary worldly perspective as to whether or not it is a direct object of perception, in one's own system, however, even the perception of double moon remains an evident direct object of perception. Therefore, with respect to sensory cognitions, irrespective of whether or not it is deluded from the point of view of ordinary worldly convention, the establishment of their object of cognition in itself establishes the subject.

⁴⁴¹ VV, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

[Objection:] However, if the opponent argues, for those who do not accept self-cognizing awareness, the perception of mental consciousness on the ordinary level as well as [those cognitions] deluded with respect to their object of apprehension cannot be established as existent because for these there is no establishment of the subject through the establishment of their object of cognition.

[Response:] Let us discuss this question. Given that this system does not accept a consciousness that is apart from the sixfold collection of consciousness, there are only two types of valid cognition: valid cognition that relates to the physical sense faculties and that relates to mental faculty alone. As for valid cognitions, the description of four types of valid cognitions – the two, direct perception and inference, the scriptural valid cognition and analogical – as found in the *Clear Words* is based upon the root text and commentary of *Rebuttal of Arguments*. The last two valid cognitions are encompassed within inferential cognition. [296] The commentary on *Four Hundred Stanzas on the Middle Way* states:

It is not the case that all entities can be understood on the basis of direct knowledge; there are those that must be realized through inference as well.⁴⁴²

With respect to direct valid cognitions, of the four types asserted by other schools, direct self-cognizing awareness is rejected; also the direct valid mental cognition too is not accepted in the manner described by the epistemological texts. For instance, the commentary on *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

The explanation of the statement in the Abhidharma teachings that each of the five [sense objects], such as form, are objects to be known by the senses and mental consciousness is not that one fact is known by the two consciousnesses. One directly cognizes the object in that it arises first while the other does not thoroughly know in the manner of clearly cognizing the object directly. When, due to the power of sensory consciousness its similar conception arises, it too is labelled as “clear cognition of it.”⁴⁴³

Thus [Candrakīrti] states that the sensory perceptions cognize the facts, such as form, directly while the mental consciousness cognizes [the fact] due to the power of the sensory perception; it does not cognize directly like the sense perceptions but is stated to be a [form of] recollection. Again, the commentary on *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

It does not, however, experiences [the object] like a feeling and so on nor does it cognize form, sound and so on, by means of the senses.⁴⁴⁴

So, [Candrakīrti] states that in order to realize [something] manifestly either it needs to be like the cognition of form and so on by the sense perceptions, or, like feelings of happiness or pain, that directly cognize their [objects] through inner experience. Of these

⁴⁴² CST, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁴³ CST, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., p.*

two, as for the latter, it must be accepted even on the ordinary level and no more than four types of direct perception have been stated [in Candrakīrti's writings]. Since this [mental consciousness] cannot be posited as a yogic direct perception or direct sense perception [297] or as a self-cognizing direct valid perception, it is taken to be a direct mental perception. Although on [the definition of] direct valid mental perception [Candrakīrti] does not agree with the epistemologists, nevertheless, it is not the case that he does not accept direct valid mental perception.

That being so, "feeling" is a term that is associated with an agent, act, and the object of an act so it takes three forms: "This person feels," "Through this one feels," and "This kind [of feeling] is being felt." Of these, the second is a valid cognition, that is it is the mental factor of feeling; the third is the object, that is it is the sensations of pleasure, pain and neutrality. This [distinction] is made in the context of a mental consciousness; in the case of sense perception, however, the three sensations cognizes form, sound and so on and the process by which it is established has already been explained earlier. Now, one could ask, "If the feeling within mental consciousness manifestly cognizes pleasure, pain and so on, would it become a self-cognizing awareness?" There is no such fault. Because the self-cognizing awareness that was negated refers to a mere subjective aspect of all mental states that is inward oriented for which the perception of distinct cognized object and the cognizer has dissolved. Here, however, a unique kind of experience is defined as a feeling in the sutras. And according to worldly conventions too, one speaks of experiencing pleasure and pain. So, [in these instances] given that the cognized and the cognizer can be perceived as distinct, it is not the same as the opponent's self-cognizing awareness. Therefore, the establishment of pleasure and so on by means of experience itself establishes the feelings.

When a mental object form, such as the clear perception of skeleton to the mental consciousness, appears, the mental consciousness establishes it by means of its form appearing to such consciousness and this itself establishes that consciousness. That this is so is same as the previous [example of feeling]. However, as for these objects, they are of different entity from mental states. As for how mental consciousness like the two self-graspings are established, this should be understood in terms of the following statement in the *Clear Words*: [298]

Whether it is the basis of definition, or one's own unique characteristic or a general characteristic, if it exists in the world, since it must be directly observable it is not hidden. Therefore, alongwith its subjective consciousness it is presented as a direct perception alone.⁴⁴⁵

Since the "basis of definition" and the "definiendum" share the same Sanskrit term,⁴⁴⁶ some translators translate the term as "basis of definition" while some translate it as "definiendum." So the statement here that all the defining characteristics – by what

⁴⁴⁵ PSP, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁴⁶ The revelant Sanskrit term is *lakṣman*, which, as Tsongkhapa states here, has been translated into two different but related Tibetan terms – *tsan shi* (spelt *mtshan gzhi*) "basis of definition" and *tsön ja* (spelt *mtshon bya*) "definiendum," that is the thing to be defined. *Elaborate further on *mtshan mtshon gzi gsum*.

means *this* is defined – and all bases of definition – *this* that is defined – are directly observable is in the context of identifying direct valid cognition within the four kinds of valid cognition. It is not a presentation of the direct observation by an omniscience; furthermore, since this [passage] is immediately followed by the statement “The cognition that has a hidden fact as its object, which has arisen on the basis of an inviolate use of a reasoning proof is an inference”⁴⁴⁷ so it does not indicate either that all unique particulars and general characteristics are evident facts and not hidden facts. So to the cognition that observes either unique particular or a general characteristic as well, the perceptions of [either of the two] occurs and this appearance is the direct object of that cognition. Therefore, positing both this [direct object] and its subject as direct perception indicates the view that the term “direct perception” applies to the object as an actual fact and to the subject as a derivative label.

Now if all the appearances that are directly perceived by a given cognition are direct objects of that cognition, in that case that appearance is evident to that cognition and further if it is nondeceptive with respect to it, given that in the world nondeceptive cognitions are known as valid there will be some that will be valid cognitions. [299] In that case, when that appearance is established by that cognition, that the subject [too] becomes established is same as before. Therefore, even with respect to such mental states as the two self-grasping, the appearances of the two selfhoods are directly perceived and at that point, that the perception of the object is established by the subject, this is the same as before. On the basis one should understand other [mental states] that are erroneous with respect to their object of apprehension.

Thus all mental states are equal insofar as their appearing objects – that which appear as objects – are established as evident is concerned. Nevertheless, between the two selfhoods and the two selflessnesses, and between the form and so on [being perceived] as permanent and impermanent, there is a great deal of difference in terms of whether or not [the mental states] constitute valid, so the differentiation valid and invalid cognitions within mental states comes to be established as well. The mental consciousness that are described as being valid with respect to their object too, these must be posited with respect to their evident objects direct valid mental perception for all other possibilities have been eliminated. They do not become valid direct self-cognizing perception for they have dualistic perception with respect to that object.

Although dualistic appearances have ceased for the uncontaminated mental states of meditative equipoise, suchness and it [still] constitute the cognized and the cognizer. [Similarly] although dualistic appearances have ceased for the inward oriented mental state [of self-cognition], there is still [a distinction of] the cognized and the cognizer. These two are totally different, however. With respect to the second, except for a philosophically postulated [distinction of] subject and object, regardless of how much one directs one’s thought on it no perceptions of the cognized and the cognizer can dawn. In contrast, with respect to the first, if one observes it with a directed mind, definitely the aspects of the subject, the mental state, and the object, suchness, will appear as distinct. When the nonconceptual gnosis of meditative equipoise establishes its object suchness,

⁴⁴⁷ PSP, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

through its power the subject gnosis is established [too] wherein the dualistic appearances of the cognized and the cognizer has dissolved. [Yet] how this is not the same as the opponent's assertion of how all mental states are from the perspective of their inward orientation mere subjective aspects wherein dualistic appearances has ceased shall be explained later in the context of the resultant level.

When, in response to one's objection against the opponent with such lines as "*By what means is its existence known?*," the opponent turns back the objections levelled against him, those who are ignorant of the subtle distinctions of the standpoints of the great ones and those who do not know how to bring forth one's own positions on the basis of [understanding] the subtle meaning of the definitive scriptures and the refined avenues of reasoning so difficult to penetrate, they place their hope in mere defiance and assert "Since, on our part, we have no positions, we are free of such faults." Although subtle differentiations such as those [drawn above] may not be relevant for such [people], thinking of othe people who are wise and possess acute and refined intelligence and who will not be contented without seeing the path that differentiates the pros and cons through refined points of reasoning, I have explained here briefly in the form of a mere opening how this sublime tradition [of Candrakirti] can be posited as flawless.

One might ask "The 'I' that remembers 'I saw blue' is the person and since blue perception and it [this 'I'] are contradictory, how can such recollection constitute the recollection of blue perception?" Just as although the eye perception that apprehends blue and the person who saw blue may be contradictory, because of that cognition's seeing of blue it is not contradictory to [validly] state 'I saw it,' similarly, what contradiction is there for the recollection of the person in terms of 'I saw that blue before' [that arose] due to the recollection of the perception of blue's seeing of blue one experiences in recollecting the perception that apprehended the blue?

3') Demonstrating through other arguments how self-cognizing awareness is untenable

This is as follows.

**Therefore since there is no self-cognition,
What is that apprehends your dependent nature?
Since the agent, the object, and the act are not one,
Therefore apprehension by itself is untenable.**

Given that it is as stated before, so if there is no self-cognizing awareness by what means do you, the Mind Only, uphold your dependent nature? Since the three – the agent that cuts the tree, the object of the act which is the tree, and the act of cutting [301] are not one, that a cognition apprehending itself is untenable. How this objection applies is as explained in the following in the autocommentary of *The Two Truths*:

To those which are cogitions by nature, the [indivisible] subtle atoms and the entities devoid of duality cannot appear. That which are not perceived do not have any conventions.⁴⁴⁸

So if one were to posit [distinction of] the cognized and cognizer for the mere experience which is free of dualistic appearance within the inward orientation of the mental states as asserted earlier, wherein it is posited as the cognized and itself as its cognizer, which when no matter how much one focuses no appearance of the duality of the cognized and cognizer comes even to a thought, then there will be absurd consequence of the agent, the object of an act and the act itself all becoming one. So master Jñānagarbha holds that the Mind Only school's self-cognizing awareness and the indivisible atom of the Disciple schools are exactly equal insofar as their existence or nonexistence is concerned. Even with regard to an indivisible atom, it needs to have [a property of] occupying a spatial location and when that aspect is perceived, other than in terms of divisibility, there is no way for it to be perceived. Therefore, the cognized and cognizer [of self-cognition] and indivisible atom of these two schools are mere postulations of philosophical schools. So [the assertion] that although these two are perceived they are not ascertained is negated as well. For instance, the autocommentary on *The Two Truths* states:

If one thinks that although they appear they are not ascertained, in that case what is it? There is no such convention. As for the claim that they appear, since there is nothing to convince, one will have to drink an oath water. So there will only be one's swear as a proof that they do appear.⁴⁴⁹

On the basis of the argument in *Descent into La'ka* as well, self-cognizing awareness is untenable:

Just as the blade of a sword
Does not cut itself and just as
The tip of a nail does not touch itself,
So too is the self-cognition of mind.⁴⁵⁰

4') Demonstrating how intrinsically existing dependent phenomena is similar to the son of a barren woman

This is as follows.

**If that which has no arising and is unknown,
If such an entity that is your dependent nature exists,
How would you object others for [claims] not fit for existence
By [drawing parallel to] the son of a barren woman?**

⁴⁴⁸ *bden gnyis rang 'grel*, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁴⁹ *bden gnyis rang 'grel*, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁵⁰ *La°k>vat>rasōtra*, Kangyur, *

That the dependent nature does not arise from itself nor from another has already been explained before [302] and that the self-cognizing awareness that established it does not exist has been explained just now. So if dependent nature, an entity that does not possess intrinsic arising and is not known by valid cognition yet is established by means of an essence, [still] exists, on what grounds do you, the Mind Only, not accept other things that are not permissible on the same ground of reason, such as the son of a barren woman by charging what kind of objections what means do you? You will have to accept their existence. So do go ahead and claim that there exists something called the son of a barren woman which transcends all conceptual elaborations, is ineffable by its very nature, and is the purview of experience of the gnosis of the Noble ones.

ii” Demonstrating how the Mind Only standpoint falls short of both the two truths

This is as follows.

**Now if the dependent nature does not exist even in a minute way,
What then can it be the condition of the conventional truth?
According to you because of your attachment to substance
You have lost all presentations of [established] worldly renown.**

If as proposed in the line “*It is the cause for imputation of things,*” if the dependent nature exists intrinsically it may be tenable, however since no intrinsically existing dependent nature exists even to a slightest degree, how can it be the condition or the substratum for the deluded [world of] nominal conventional truth? For it does not exist even to a slightest degree. Given that they assert the dependent nature to be ultimately real, it states here that it falls short of an ultimate truth. Therefore, given that for this Mind Only school, whatever causations there are of worldly convention it does not exist by virtue of an essence. Alas! so according to this opponent, the Mind Only, as you have no skill of wisdom in discriminating the final definitive truth you cling to real existence of mental states alone as the dependent nature substrate. And without burning the clay vase of dependent nature you have poured into it incorrect analyses that resemble water and, in this way, revealed the inferiority of your intelligence. Because of this reason you have lost or destroyed worldly conventions that are established within the worldly framework alone such as “sit down,” “go,” and so on and likewise, [303] the external forms as well as the sensations arisen on the basis of external objects as one’s focus. Therefore, for this Mind Only school only problems will remain likely; they will not attain the higher or excellent state. The argument that if external reality is negated [conventions] such as “go” will become untenable indicates that these are related to external [facts]. So this demonstrates how [the Mind Only] falls short of conventional truth.

iii” Therefore it is worthy to follow after Nāgārjuna alone

This is as follows.

**Those who remain outside the path of master Nāgārjuna,
They have no means for [attaining] tranquility;**

**They have regressed from the conventional truth and suchness;
Because of this regression there is no achievement of liberation.**

**The conventional truth is the means,
While the ultimate truth is its end;
He who does not know their distinction
Will enter inferior paths through false conceptuality.**

Therefore, those who enter the path of the system of a master who is distorted in that he interprets what is provisional as definitive, who constructs [a way] through his own conceptualization that does not constitute the Buddha's intention – those who remain outside the path opened by master Noble Nṅṛjuna – for them there does not exist the primary method for attaining the peace of nirvaṇa. Why is this so? Because those who remain thus outside definitely fall short of conventional truth and the ultimate truth. Once one falls short of the two truths, until this not given up, there is no achievement of liberation. Again, one might ask “Why, because of falling short of the two truths, is there no achievement of liberation?” Because the presentation of conventional truths that is not lost constitutes the means for realizing the ultimate truth as it is and the realization of ultimate truth as it constitutes the end derived from the means mentioned earlier. So he who fails to understand the differentiation of these two truths will, because of false conceptualizations, enter an inferior path. This [stanza] demonstrates how until there is a flawless system of the conventions there is no realization of the ultimate truth as it is. One should, therefore, follow only after the tradition initiated by Nṅṛjuna.

To substantiate this point by means of a scripture, [304] the *Meditative Absorption Definitely Presenting Suchness* states:

The knower of the world without hearing it from another
These two truths were taught by himself;
These are the conventional and the ultimate truths;
Nowhere is there the existence of a third truth.⁴⁵¹

This presents how the Buddha taught the two truths through his own independence and how all objects of knowledge are encompassed within the division of the two truths. Then, it states:

He who has gone to the bliss and who gives rise to
Devotion in the beings for their own happiness,
The conquerors have shown the conventional truth
For the sake of these beings to help the world.⁴⁵²

⁴⁵¹ *. * Kangyur, * This and all the subsequent stanzas from the same sutra are cited in Candrakīrti's autocommentary in one continuous uninterrupted flow. Here, Tsongkhapa divides them into different sections and provides a helpful summary of the content of each of these sections.

⁴⁵² Ibid., p. *

This [stanza] indicates the purpose of present the conventional truth.

The six classes of beings revealed within sentient beings –
The hell beings, animals and the hungry ghosts,
Those of the demigod class, humans and the gods –
The lion of humans label these as conventional truths.

The lower castes and likewise the higher castes,
The wealthy families and the poor families,
The class of laborers and that of the servants,
The class of women, male and neuter,
Whatever distinctions amongst beings there are,
You, the peerless has revealed them to be transient.
So having wisely comprehended these as conventions,
The knower of the world taught likewise to others.⁴⁵³

These [lines] indicate the manner in which the conventional truth was taught.

The beings who delight in this revolve in cyclic existence,
Engaging in the eight worldly concerns of the beings:
Have and have not, pleasing and unpleasing words,
Praise and disparagement, joy and pain.

When they obtain the have attainment arises for it;
When they do not obtain this, in turn, perturbs them;
Those not presented should be known on this basis.
So through these eight illnesses their continuum is harmed.⁴⁵⁴

These [lines] show how those who grasps at this conventional truth as real and delights in it [305] engage in the eight worldly concerns and, tormented by these, they revolve in the cycle of existence. And on the basis of having presented the first two of the eight worldly concerns, it states that one should understand how the remaining ones are presented as well.

Those who utter this conventional truth to be ultimate,
Recognize that they are intelligent ones who have erred.⁴⁵⁵

These [lines] indicate that those who assert the conventional truth, such as six classes of beings, to be ultimate, that is as true existence, one should recognize that they are endowed with distorted cognition. Therefore, it states that the Buddhist schools that accepted in such manner are erroneous tenets.

The ugly as beautiful and the painful and joyful,

⁴⁵³ Ibid., p.*

⁴⁵⁴ Ibid., p.*

⁴⁵⁵ Ibid., p.*

And those who assert what is selfless to be the self,
They speak of impermanent facts as permanent;
Those who thus delight in them and abide in the signs,
If they come to hear the Sugata's words,
Terrified, failing to understand as it is, they'll shun.

Having shunned the Sugata's words,
They'll experience unbearable sufferings in the hells;
Although they'll seek bliss incorrectly,
A hundredfold sufferings will these children experience.⁴⁵⁶

These [lines] explain how those who are habituated in the four distorted [understandings] and the non-Buddhist schools that are tainted by philosophies validating these, if they hear the Buddha's words they will shun them. Because of this they will depart to the hell realms and although they may search for the bliss of liberation through incorrect means, not only will they not find it they will be tormented by vast amount of sufferings.

Whosoever realizes with a mind not turned away
This doctrine that is beneficial to the world,
Just like the snake that shuns its old skin,
Transcending all existence he will attain peace.

All this phenomena is devoid of intrinsic nature;
Known as "emptiness," "signlessness" or the "ultimate,"
Those who hear it and experience joy for it, [306]
They'll attain the unexcelled enlightenment.

O conqueror, you saw the aggregates to be empty;
Likewise the elements and the sense bases;
That the town of senses is devoid of signs,
All of this you, O sage, has seen as they are.⁴⁵⁷

Thus, having shown how if one realizes undistortedly the meaning of the profound scriptures one will gain freedom from cyclic existence, then in response to the possible enquiry "What is the method of such realization?" it states that when one hears that all this phenomena are devoid of intrinsic nature and so on, if one becomes delighted and realizes the meaning [of these words], one will attain enlightenment. So earlier the conventional truth was presented while here the ultimate truth is presented.

The elements refer to earth elements and so on, while the sense bases refer to form, sound and so on. Therefore, those who are deprived of the knowledge of conventional truth as mere designation and the ultimate truth in terms of no intrinsic existence, how can there be liberation? Therefore, those who propound mind only have entered an erroneous path

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., p.*

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid., p.*

alone.⁴⁵⁸ That the presentation of the nominal truth is the means is stated in the *King of Meditation Sutra*:

The reality that is devoid of letters,
Who listens to it? Who teaches it?
So by superimposing on what is unchanging,
Nonetheless [others] listen and I teach it.⁴⁵⁹

These two lines present how they do not exist on the ultimate level. So that which is devoid of letters on the ultimate level, this is being superimposed upon, that is being imputed by means of conceptualization, and is being listened to and is being taught. Although the Sanskrit term for letter *akṣara* connotes both “letter” and “unchanging,” here it is more suitable to translate it as “absence of letter.” Although “superimposition” is often explained in terms of exaggerating what is not there as existent and what is not as *is*, one should hold this alone to be its meaning. This can refer to being imputed by conceptual thought in general as well. [307] It is by abiding in the nominal truth alone that the ultimate truth is taught and it is on this basis one comprehends the ultimate truth and from this, in turn, the ultimate, that is nirvāṇa, is attained. *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* states:

Without reliance on the conventions,
The ultimate truth cannot be taught;
Without realizing the ultimate truth,
Nirvāṇa cannot be attained.⁴⁶⁰

iv” How the negation of dependent phenomena is dissimilar to [negating] worldly convention

This is as follows [as found in the commentary]:

[Objection:] Now if you [Madhyamika] say such highly inconsiderate things to us we shall not tolerate this. If you display your skill in eliminating other’s positions alone and, because it is untenable due to [logical] evidence if you eliminate the dependent nature, in that case, because of the untenability due to the same stated logical evidence, we shall eliminate the conventional truths known to you.

[Response:] Imagine if there is someone who has robbed you of your wealth which you have accumulated since beginningless time through hundredfold hardships, and if someone were assume the guise of a friend and give him a poisonous food and take back your [stolen] wealth you would be happy. In the same manner, we rob the grasping at dependent nature as true existence of its object and thus render you help. So in response if you were to be happy and

⁴⁵⁸ From the second sentence of this paragraph, including the subsequent quotation from *King of Meditations Sutra* represent close paraphrasing from Candrakīrti’s autocommentary. See pp.*

⁴⁵⁹ *Samadhirājāsūtra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, p.*

⁴⁶⁰ MMK, *

rejoice this would be appropriate. On our part, we shall feel complimented and happy.⁴⁶¹

Thus it reads:

**This entity of dependent nature just as you assert,
This I do not accept even on the conventional level;
Even though they do not exist for the sake of their effect
From the perspective of the world I say that they exist.**

You, the Mind Only, assert the dependent nature that exists as real entity, that is existing by virtue of an essence, as stated in *The Thirty Verses* “Without seeing that this is not seen,” which you accept within your own system on the basis that it is internal by the Noble Ones through their gnosis. I [Candrakīrti] do not accept a conventional truth that is similarly intrinsic existence. What is it then? [308] These phenomena, such as aggregates and so on, although they do not exist intrinsically, because they are known within the framework of the world alone, from the perspective of the world alone I say that they exist.

Here there are modes to the positing of the conventional truths, such as aggregates and so on, from the perspective of worldly convention. The Madhyamika’s own way of positing [phenomena] as conventional truth is accepted from the perspective of valid conventional cognitions; not from the perspective of the rational cognition [of suchness]. However, on some occasions, due to [special] purposes, aggregates and so on are posited as existing by means of an intrinsic nature. This is not accepted within one’s own standpoint but only for the sake of others. So the negation of these two are not the same. The acceptance of such [concepts] for the sake of the other is for a result, that is a purpose. This is a skillful means to turn the spiritual aspirant away from inferior philosophical tenets and to gradually lead to the realization of suchness. Therefore, [the view] that all presentations in this [Candrakīrti’s] text are for the sake of others and are not accepted within one’s own standpoint is not the meaning of the text. That this is so can be discerned from the scripture cited to substantiate this point. The citation is the following from *Presentation of the Three Vows*:

The world disputes with me; I do not dispute the world. Whatever the world accepts to exist I too accept their existence. Whatever the world accepts not to exist I too accept their nonexistence.⁴⁶²

This is the meaning of the following lines in the *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* where it is stated that all presentations, such as existence and nonexistence, are posited on the basis of the power of conventions known to the world.

Abiding, arising, disintegrating, existence or nonexistence,
Inferiority, equality, or distinguished,

⁴⁶¹ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁶² Kangyur, *

These were taught by the Buddhas through the power
Of worldly conventions not from final truth.⁴⁶³

[It then reads:]

**Just as they do not exist for the Arhats
Who, relinquishing their aggregates, abide in [nirvanic] peace,
If they do not exist for the world as well this will equal;
But I do not say that this so for the world as well.**

Now just as all conventional truths do not exist [309] for the Arhats who, having relinquished their aggregates, abide in the tranquil expanse of [nirva^a] without residue, if the conventional truth does not exist even within the perspective of the world too, then just like it does not exist for that nirva^a without residue I would say that this [world of] conventional truth would not exist even from the perspective of the worldly convention as well. Therefore, it is only on the contingency of worldly conventions that I accept the conventional truth; it is not the case that I have accepted [the existence of conventional truth] independently without dependence on worldly conventions.

This [conventional truth] is accepted first by the world alone. Therefore, on the basis of what has been accepted alone, one can eliminate [inappropriate claims] and such elimination is legitimate as well. This is not so from the standpoint of the other, namely the Middle Way school.⁴⁶⁴ To state that this is so, it reads:

**If the worldly convention does not undermine you,
Then refute this [external reality] that is contingent upon the world;
You and the world should thus enter in a debate;
I shall embrace what emerges later as the more powerful.**

On our part, we shall abide in the meditation with very great hardship to help dismantle the delusory perceptions of the conventional truth within our own mental continuum. If you remain unharmed by the world, then pray do negate this conventional truth within the perspective of the world alone. If that can be negated by your reasoning I too shall **applaud** (*stonfs gdan pai*) you, that is shall be your ally. You will be harmed by the world, however. Therefore, we shall not be your ally but remain neutral. You and the world should enter into a debate and in its aftermath whoever comes out the more powerful, we shall rely upon you. Now if you are defeated by the world we shall rely

⁴⁶³ Seventy Verses, * Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁶⁴ This paragraph is a close paraphrase from Candrakīrti's autocommentary. The paragraph is making the following critical point on what constitutes a legitimate negation. In response to the Mind Only's challenge that if you, Madhyamika, negate our intrinsically real consciousness, i.e. the so-called dependent nature, we will then negate conventions that you accept as well, Candrakīrti asserts that given that conventional truths are posited on the basis of worldly conventions, it is only within the framework of worldly conventions that they could be negated or affirmed. Such negation cannot be done from the standpoint of a philosophical school, including even his own Madhyamika.

upon [the conventions of] the world which is so powerful. This being so, since the nonexistence of external reality is harmed by valid conventional cognitions one cannot establish the nonexistence of external reality.

One might then think “In that case the external reality of [atoms] devoid of directional parts cannot be negated through the Mind Only school’s reasoning negating external reality composed of indivisible atoms on the ground that such atoms do not exist.” [310] I do not say that these cannot be negated by valid cognition; however, even if such things are negated, it does not entail the nonexistence of external reality. With this one should also understand how although temporally indivisible [points of] cognition and continuums made of connecting such points are negated, this does not negate cognition [in general]. According to the opponent’s system, however, it is thought that if external reality [composed] of indivisible atoms is negated sensory perceptions that are not deluded with respect to their perceptions comes to be negated. And since a deluded sensory perception cannot posit facts so external reality comes to be negated. Here, in contrast, although a deluded sensory perception cannot posit an object that is real, to posit an object that is unreal in fact it is most complementary, so it was understood [by Candrakīrti]. This is accepted by Āryadeva as well. For instance the *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

“One exists” and “the other does not,”
Not in reality nor by the world.⁴⁶⁵

Thus he states that discriminating between [external] reality and cognition in terms of their existence and nonexistence is not an acceptable standpoint of any of the two truths. So making such differentiation [between the two] is not the position of master Nāgārjuna as well.

c” Demonstrating that the term “only” in the teaching of Mind Only does not reject external reality

This has three parts:

- i” Explaining the intention of the statement of mind only in *The Ten Levels*
- ii” Demonstrating how external [reality] and inner mind are equal in their existence or nonexistence
- iii” Explaining the intention of the statement of mind only in the *Descent into Laṅkā*

The first has three parts:

- 1’) Establishing that the term “only” does not negate external [reality] by means of citation from *The Ten Levels*
- 2’) Establishing this point by means of other scriptures as well
- 3’) Establishing the primacy of the mind with the term “only”

⁴⁶⁵ CS, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

[Objection:] Now even if it is devoid of evidence, that is being proven by a reasoning probing into suchness, if you, due to the fear of being harmed by the world, accept the conventional truth, then fearing being harmed by scriptures you will have to accept the mind only as well. For instance, this is as stated in the following in *The Ten Levels* sutra: “On this I think thus: [311] This world of three realms is mind only.”⁴⁶⁶

[Response:] To this I shall say the following: “The conqueror’s words are like a ground made of the precious gem lapis lazuli. So failing to recognize that this is a lapis lazuli [ground] you, who speak of consciousness as a real entity, confuse this for water. And desiring to scoop up the water of consciousness asserted to be a real entity, yet because the earthen jar of your intelligence is not burnt when you rinsed it, it disintegrated into a hundred pieces. When this happens, for those who know its true nature this will become only an object of laughter. The meaning of the sutra [you have cited] is not as it appears to your mind. What then is the meaning of the sutra? To explain this, it reads:

**The statement that the bodhisattva who is at the threshold
Of the manifest level cognizes the three worlds to be mere consciousness,
This is for the sake of rejecting eternal self as the creator;
The mind alone is understood to be the creator.**

The statement that the bodhisattva on the sixth level of the manifest, who possesses the mind contemplating the omniscient gnosis – the awakening that is facing towards the ultimate expanse – realizes the cyclic existence of the three realms as a mind only is to negate the permanent self as the creator and to realize the mind, a conventional truth, alone to be creator. That the bodhisattva has realized the creator of the world to be the mind alone is stated in the following in *The Ten Levels*:

He will thoroughly contemplate the dependent origination in its sequential order. This being so, the thought might occur to him “There is no creator to the aggregates of suffering, to this tree of suffering; there is no experiencer of feeling at all.” He will then think thus: “Because of the clinging to a creator the karmic acts do exist. For whom there is no creator, he will ultimately not observe karma as well.” He will think thus: [312] “This world of the three realms is mind only. All of these twelve limbs of cyclic existence, which have been clearly disintinguished and taught by the Tatṣgatha, these too are contingent upon this one thing, the mind.”⁴⁶⁷

Thus it has been stated extensively. This sutra establishes mere [existence of the world] with no creator and experiencer and, when explaining the meaning of “mind only,” it states that the twelve links are contingent upon one mind. Therefore, the term “only” in that sutra does not reject [externality] facts but rejects a creator separate from the mind. As for the opponent of this [argument], *A Summary of the Great Vehicle* states “Here, the

⁴⁶⁶ Sutra, Kangyur, * The text of both the objection and the subsequent response presented in Tsongkhapa’s text here represents a paraphrase from Candrakīrti’s commentary with slight elaborations. See MABh, p.*

⁴⁶⁷ Sutra, Kangyur, *

scripture is this. In *The Ten Levels* the Blessed One states: ‘It is thus: This world of the three realms is mind only.’”⁴⁶⁸ Thus of the two, scripture and reasoning, for the proof of consciousness only presented [in *A Summary of the Great Vehicle*], this is identified as the scripture. This scripture is cited also in the autocommentary of *The Twenty Verses* too where [Vasubandhu] explains that the “mind” refers to it together with its concomitant [mental] factors and the statement of “only” rejects [external] reality.⁴⁶⁹

The refutation [the Mind Only] in the above manner was undertaken first by Bhāvaviveka; it was undertaken then [later] by Candrakīrti as well.

2’) Establishing this point by means of other scriptures as well

Having explained that the rejection of another creator by the term “only” in the mind only is the meaning of *The Ten Levels* sutra, to indicate that this very point is presented in other scriptures as well, it reads:

**Therefore to help enhance the mind of the intelligent ones,
In the *Descent into Laṅkā* sutra the omniscient taught
This diamond word destroying the high peaks of extreme views
to help penetrate the intention [of sutras such as the *Ten Levels*].**

In that the rejection of another creator by the term “only” is the meaning of *The Ten Levels* sutra, to help enhance the mind of those intelligent ones capable of realizing suchness, in the *Descent into Laṅkā* sutra one finds diamond words [uttered] the omniscient that destroy the towering mountains of inferior views within the mental continuum of the *tirthikas*, such as self, primal substance, and so on which they assert to be the creator of the world. These were taught by the Buddha to help fathom the intention of the statements of mind only made in other sutras. [313] The diamond [words] is the following stated in the *Descent into Laṅkā*:

The “person,” “continuum,” “aggregates,”
Likewise “condition” and the “atoms,”
“Primal substance” and “ÈṂvara,” these creators,
I have taught them to be mind only.⁴⁷⁰

Thus from the person to ÈṂvara, all those that have been proposed to be the creator, it states that they are not the creator and that I say the mind only to be the creator. To interpret the meaning of this sutra, it reads:

**Because he did not see what have been asserted
By the *tirthikas* in their own texts
As the creator [of the world as they claim],
The conqueror stated that mind alone is the creator.**

⁴⁶⁸ *Mahāyānasaṅgraha*, Tengyur, sems tsam, p.*

⁴⁶⁹ *Nyishu pa’I rang ’grel*, Tengyur, sems tsam, p.*

⁴⁷⁰ *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, Kangur, p.*

Just as in their own individual tenets established by their own treatises, the *tirthikas* assert the person and so on, such as the continuum, the aggregates, to be the creator, not seeing all these to be the creator, the Conqueror taught the mind only to be the creator of the world. In the root text, the expression “the *Tirthikas*” is intended in terms of the majority; even those on this side of the teaching, namely the Buddhists, too designate the continuum and the aggregates to be creator as well. Alternatively, those who conceive the person to be the creator are not Buddhists and not of this side of the teaching. Because, just like the *Tirthikas*, they have distortedly understood the meaning of the Buddha’s teaching. So the term *Tirthika* is a generic, more pervasive word. The *Precious Garland* too states:

Those who assert the person to be the aggregates,
The Sa’khyas and the children of owl,
And to the Naked if one were to ask
“What it’s it that transcends existence and nonexistence?”

Therefore what the Buddhas have taught
To be immortal and the profound
Transcending existence and nonexistence,
Know these to be a **specialty of the teaching**.⁴⁷¹

Thus if it appears that those who propound substantial existence of person and aggregates speak of something that is free of the extremes of existence and nonexistence, then ask them. They will have nothing to say on this point. [314] Therefore know that the meaning of the Buddha’s teaching, which is free of the two extremes of existence and nonexistence, is a specialty or a distinctive feature that cannot be found in other teachings. So states Nḡgṛjuna.

As this cycle of existence has no beginning, what kind of evil concept has not occurred in the past and what kind will not occur in the future? Even at present too, there are those like the white-clad renunciates who seem to present the aggregates and so on to be substantially existent.⁴⁷² In some version of the text, there appears a slight variation in the term;⁴⁷³ in the translation of the *Explanation of the Commentary*, it reads as “monks such as Kyasing (**Skya bsing**) and its meaning is explained as the monks of the Jaina school. A renunciate is a term for a meditator so the term refers [here] to a Buddhist school known as the White Meditator, a school that asserts the aggregates to be substantially existent.

⁴⁷¹ *Ratnavali*, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.* These two stanzas from Nḡgṛjuna’s *Precious Garland* are cited also in Candrakīrti’s commentary.

⁴⁷² Up to this point, this paragraph represents a close paraphrase from Candrakīrti’s commentary.

⁴⁷³ The Tibetan text here reads: *dpe kha cig las sprong skar po la sogs pa zhes kyang ‘byung zhing/* Literally, it reads “In some version of the text, the reading ‘white *sprong*’ is found as well. The term *sprong*, as far as I know, is meaningless in Tibetan and Tsongkhapa is perhaps suggesting here that it is a corrupt spelling of *spong* (pronounced *pong*), which means a renunciate.

3') Establishing the primacy of the mind with the term “only”

Now having explained how, because it is a creator other than the mind that has been rejected, the purpose of the term “only” has been fulfilled, that is that the term “only” does not negate the object of knowledge, the external reality, now to explain how on the basis of another mode of exposition – namely, that the mind is primary – how it is impossible to negate external reality, it reads:

**Just as perfection of suchness is termed “the Awakened One,”
Likewise the mind alone is primary in the world;
So in the sutras the “mind only” is stated;
Rejection of matter is not the meaning of the sutras.**

**If having known these to be mind only
[The Buddha] were to negate matter on this basis,
Why did the great being stated that the mind
Comes into being from delusion and karma?**

Just as when the perfect development of the mind in suchness is termed the “Buddha” [the Awakened One], the first part of the term “Awakened” is kept nonexplicit. Though it is implicit, one can still use the convention “the Buddha.” Likewise, out of the two, matter and mind, it is the mind alone that constitutes the primary one. So one should recognize that keeping the second part of the term “primary” as nonexplicit, in the sutras it has been stated that the three realms is mind only. So the statement “mind only” here precludes form and so on [315] as being primary in the constituting the three realms. The exposition that the mind alone exists intrinsically and rejecting external matter by stating that it does not exist is not the meaning of the sutras. So you, the Mind Only, should accept without doubt the meaning of *The Ten Levels* sutra just as we have explained.

If, in accordance with your standpoint, knowing that the these three realms are an intrinsically existing mind only [the Buddha] rejected external reality in the *The Ten Levels*, then how can it be logical for the great being, the Buddha, to once again state in *The Ten Levels* sutra that because of the mind, namely ignorance, volition has arisen and because of volition consciousness has arisen? Thus stating that it is from the two factors - ignorance, delusion, and volition, karma - that [consciousness has arisen]. This will not be logical.

In *The Ten Levels Sutra* itself consciousness is described as the effect of ignorance and volition; it does not describe it as an intrinsic existence. If it is described as a dependent origination and also as intrinsic existence, given that the errors have ceased for the speaker, and also since both these positions cannot be accepted within one’s own standpoint, one should recognize that this is being accepted for the sake of others to help guide other spiritual trainees. That both positions cannot be accepted within one’s own standpoint is this: If consciousness exists by virtue of its own reality, consciousness will become such that it will not be contingent upon ignorance and volition. However, since it

is contingent [upon them] therefore it does not exist by virtue of its own reality. So by all possible ways it is certain that consciousness does not exist by virtue of an intrinsic nature. Just like the falling hair of someone infected with cataracts, it is held, that it exists when there is the condition for distortion; [316] and when there is no such condition for distortion it does not exist.

That if there is ignorance, the condition for distortion, there exists consciousness is presented by the sequential order of dependent origination; if there is no ignorance that consciousness will cease is presented by the reversal order of dependent origination. Then, at the end, [the sutra] presents [this causal dynamics] extensively with statements like “Thus volition possesses faults of a multitude of ill-consequences and when it is discriminatively contemplated as devoid of identity, as unborn, and unceasing ...”⁴⁷⁴ This being so what sane person would, after having seen the statements in this sutra, conceive of consciousness as substantially existent? No one would. That one [continues to] do so is due to the established tenets of one’s own inner grasping at true existence. The *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* also states:

Since the Buddhas have stated
That the world is conditioned by ignorance,
So why is it not reasonable
That this world is [a result of] conceptualization?

Since it comes to an end
When ignorance ceases;
Why does it not become clear then
That it was conjured by ignorance?⁴⁷⁵

The point being made here is this: If something exists by virtue of its own identity it becomes a true mode of being. In that case, when erroneous perception ceases it should become clearer; it would not dissolve.

To present the point that the mind is primary, it reads:

**It’s the mind itself that constructed the world
Of sentience and the extremely diverse container worlds;
So all beings arose from karma, it was taught;
There is no karma if the mind is rejected.**

**Although matter exists it has no status
Of a creator like in the case of the mind;
So a creator other than the mind is rejected;**

⁴⁷⁴ Tsongkhapa is here paraphrasing from Candrakīrti’s commentary where he cites extensively from *The Ten Levels* sutra’s presentation of the causal dynamics of the twelve links of dependent origination both in terms of sequential order or origination and the reversal order of cessation.

⁴⁷⁵ *Sixty Stanzas*, 37, 38.

The matter is not being negated [in the sutras].

The world of sentience obtains its reality through karma and the afflictions accumulated by one's own selves, while the diverse world of container [the environment] are created or produced by the collective karma accumulated by these sentient beings alone. This [latter] includes from the wind mandala up to the highest container [world] of Akani"ta. Here, such diverse forms as the [colorful] feathers of peacock, these are produced by the unique karma of these sentient beings alone. [317] In contrast, the diverse colors of lotus and so on are produced by collective karma of the sentient beings. One should understand similarly with respect to other [similar] facts as well. It is stated:

It's due to the power of sentient beings
Black mountains arisen in their time;
So in the hells and in the higher realms,
Likewise there are weapons and jewel trees.⁴⁷⁶

That these two worlds [of sentience and their habitat] are produced by the two karma – collective and noncollective – is explained in the texts of the Mind Only school as well. So it is not the case even according to the Mind Only school that the container world does not exist.

Thus all transmigrating beings are stated to have arisen from karma and there cannot be karma if the mind is rejected; because it is only with the possession of mind that karma is accrued, so karma is, in turn, supported by the mind. Thus in *The Ten Levels* sutra, with the statement of there being “no creator” and “no experiencer of feeling,” it presents how the term “only” rejects another creator, and with the statement that all twelve links are contingent upon one fact, the mind, it presents how the term “only” indicates the mind to be the primary. So the first explanation is from a negative perspective while the second is from an affirmative perspective. Given that for the engagement of transmigrating beings it is the mind that is primary and the factors other than the mind are not primary, in the sutras the mind is defined as being the principal, not matter. Therefore, although the existence of matter is indeed accepted this matter does not possess agency in the sense of going in the manner similar to the mind. Therefore, it is a creator other than the mind that is averted or rejected; the external matter is not negated.

Some, such as the Sa'khya, assert primal substrate to be the creator, while some [318] Buddhists assert the mind to be the creator. However, in that matter is not the creator, there is no dispute. Therefore, when examining primal substrate and so on which others speculate to be the creator, to eliminate primal substrate and so on that do not possess the characteristics of such a creator, seeing the mind as nominally capable of being such a creator the mind is spoken of as the creator. Then primal substrate and so on are eliminated so it is reasonable to state that the competing [forces] like primal substrate that needs to be expelled are overrun. For example, just as when there are two competing kings wanting to rule a country and one is removed and the one removed finds his own country [to rule], because they both find what they need, no harm is caused to the

⁴⁷⁶ * Check source.

ordinary public, likewise, given that there is no harm for matter one should ascertain that matter exists indeed.

ii” Demonstrating how external [reality] and inner mind are equal in their existence or nonexistence

This is as follows.

**Abiding within the truth of the world,
As known to the world all five aggregates exist;
When the gnosis on suchness comes to dawn,
For that yogi these five will not come into being.**

**If there is no matter hold not there is mind;
If there is mind hold not that there is no matter;**

Therefore to abide within the presentation of the world in the manner as explained before, the aggregate of form and so on are known to the world so all five aggregates exist. While for the meditative equipoise of the Noble Ones within which we accept the gnosis directly realizing suchness has dawned, within that perspective all five aggregates will not occur. In that this is so, if you conceive the external matter to be nonexistent, then do not conceive the mind to be existent. [On the other hand] if it is indeed that you assert the mind to be existent, then do not conceive the matter to be nonexistent. However, if you conceive the external matter to be nonexistent when probed by reasoning searching for the true referent of designations, in that case, the existence of both outer and inner are devoid of logical tenability, so you will have to realize the inner mind too to be nonexistent. [319] Or at that point if you conceive the mind to be existent, in that case, you will have to conceive matter to be existent as well for both are known to the world.

Here, the nonexistence of matter that the Mind Only speaks of in their discrimination between matter and mind in terms of their existence or nonexistence refers to external matter. For [Candrakīrti] writes “Without external held object but from one’s own seed/ The perceptions of blue and so on occur.”⁴⁷⁷ And in the commentary to that section, it states “Without the existence of external matter,” thus the negation of matter is qualified with the term “external.” Again, the commentary states “Having stated how the term “only” cannot reject the object of knowledge now to present how, on other grounds of other explanations as well, it is impossible to negate external objects ...”⁴⁷⁸ Thus [the commentary] states that the rejection of form and so on does not constitute the meaning of the sutra; and the rejection of form and so on is explained in terms of rejection of external [objects]. Otherwise, if one takes it to be only what is explicit on the literal level, because [Candrakīrti] states “Having stated how the term ‘only’ cannot negate the object of knowledge,” one will have to assert that the Mind Only accepts that the term “only” negates the object of knowledge of the mind. If the Mind Only school does not accept

⁴⁷⁷ MA, 6.*

⁴⁷⁸ MABh, p.*

material objects, this will directly contradict what is stated in the following in *A Summary of the Great Vehicle*:

Even with respect to the appropriation of physical organs by the conceived [fluids] that have already fused, it is untenable for this without the existence of a fruitional effect consciousness that is separate from these [sense organs]. ..

The consciousness and the name-and-form which operate, like a beam and the house, in a mutually supporting manner, all of these would not be possible if there is no fruitional effect consciousness.⁴⁷⁹

This is because you, the opponent, maintain that if one accepts material phenomena [320] one will have to accept external reality. Therefore, one should not speak contrary to the view that although they [the Mind Only] accepts the arising of name-and-form due to consciousness, they do not accept external reality. There are so many explanations of this type when unique presentations of the Mind Only school are being made.

One should understand in the following manner that even in the scriptures too external objects and inner cognitions are treated equally with respect to their existence or nonexistence is concerned. It reads:

**These are rejected equally in the sutras on the wisdom way,
[While] they are found [equally] in Abhidharma teachings.**

**Even after having dismantled such sequence of the two truths,
Since your substance is negated it cannot be established;
So because of such sequence you should accept that entities
Are not primodially arisen but arisen [in the] wordly [sense].**

Thus in the sutras of the way of the perfection of wisdom these five aggregates, such as form, are equally rejected, that is negated, by the Buddha as intrinsic existence. They state, for instance, “Subhuti, form is empty of intrinsic existence” up to “Consciousness is empty of intrinsic existence.”⁴⁸⁰ In the Abhidharma teachings, however, all five are taught equally in terms of their individual and general characteristics and so on. Therefore, the opponent [the Mind Only school] will be tearing down those stages of the two truths established through scriptural citation and reasoning that, as explained before, the equality of external [reality] and the mind in terms of their nonexistence on the ultimate level and their equality in terms of their existence on the conventional level. Even after tearing down [the two truths] in this manner, your, that is the Mind Only school’s substantially existing dependent nature will remain unestablished. Why is this so? In that substantially existing dependent nature had been refuted many times before, your efforts will be pointless. For not to tear down the stages of the two truths, one has to accept that it does not exist on the ultimate level but it does so on the conventional level, so on the basis of the stages [of explanation presented] before, one should cognize the entities as

⁴⁷⁹ *Mahāyānaśāstra*, Tengyur, sems tsam, p.*

⁴⁸⁰ *.*

primarily non arisen on the level of suchness yet arisen on the level of worldly conventions.

This demonstrates how the entities being nonarisen is on the ultimate level [321] while their having arisen is accepted on the conventional level. Therefore, one needs to definitely qualify the object of negation.

iii” Explaining the intention of the statement of mind only in the *Descent into La^oka*

This has two parts:

- 1’) Presenting the statement of mind only with no external reality as provisional
- 2’) Presenting the method of understanding the provisional and definitive meanings of the sutras

The first has two parts:

- a’) Presenting that it is provisional by means of scripture
- b’) Presenting that it is provisional by means of reasoning

The first has two parts:

- i’) The actual point
- ii’) Demonstrating how other similar sutras are provisional as well

[Question:] Although one might explain the meaning of *The Ten Levels* sutra in the above way, in another scripture, that is *Descent into La^oka*, it states:

What appear as external do not exist;
It’s the mind that appears as diverse:
Like a body, like resources and like habitat;
I say that these are the mind.⁴⁸¹

Here, “body” refers to the sense bases, such as eyes, hence the physical [aspects]; “resources” refer to the five sense objects, such as form, sound and so on; “habitat” refers to the container world. Since, there is external other than the mind that exists, it is the mind only that appears as body, as resources and as habitats. And when such perceptions arise, what exists as the objects [of the experience], such as body and so on, seem like something external and separate from consciousness. Therefore [this world of] three realms is mind only.

[Response:] To state that this sutra too is **intentionally inclined** (*dgongs pa can*), it reads:

**The the sutras where it is stated that external appearances
Do not exist but the mind appears in diverse forms,
They’re for the sake of those who extremely attached to form**

⁴⁸¹ *La^ok>vat>rasôtra*, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

To help reject form so they are provisional only.

This was taught by the Buddha to be provisional alone;

This is proven by reason to be provisional alone;

The intention of “The the sutras where it is stated that external appearances/ Do not exist but the mind appears in diverse forms” is this. For those beings, who are lustful due to being extremely attached to material form and who have no freedom because of engagement [with the world] through anger, conceit and so on, who because of their manifest clinging to [material form] lead themselves to grave negative karma [322] and become degenerate in their accumulation of merit and wisdom, the Blessed One, in order to help them avert such afflictions conditioned by material form, to the lustful, just like [the visualization of] skeletons to undermine attachment for external objects, although this is not the case that they are mind only is presented. This is how one should understand this.

Again, on what ground do we understand that this scripture is provisional and not definitive? This statement that there is no external reality and that it is mind only is established as provisional because the Buddha [himself] stated it to be provisional. This sutra is established as provisional by means of the evidence of reason as well. Here, the lines “What appear as external do not exist” and so on is not interpreted by this master [Candrakīrti], as explained in *The Ten Levels* sutra, in terms that they do not reject external reality but another creator. Here, this [passage of the sutra] is interpreted in terms that although the term “only” [here] does reject external reality, it is a provisional meaning. The great master Bhāvaviveka, on the other hand, interprets that even this sutra too presents the mind arising in the likeness of body, resources and habitat – that is being colored by their aspects as if shadowed – so he upholds the statement “no existence of external reality” as negating the seeing of [external objects] without there being aspects [of the objects]. Thus he maintains that the term “only” does not reject external reality [even in this *Laṅkāvatāra* passage].⁴⁸²

ii’) Demonstrating how other similar sutras are provisional as well

This is as follows.

So other sutras that are similar to these,

They are revealed to be provisional by this citation too.

Not only is the statement that there is no external reality and that there is the mind only in lines, such as “What appear as external do not exist,” is a provisional meaning, other sutras similar to the ones mentioned earlier which are upheld by the Mind Only school as definitive, these too are elucidated to be provisional by this scriptural citation which shall be presented later. What are those similar sutras? [323]

⁴⁸² Check source, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.* *Tarkajvāla*, chapter 5?

(1) In [sutra] *Unravelling the Thought*, of the three natures that are presented, [it is stated that] the imputed nature does not exist and the dependent exists; likewise, there are [statements] like the following:

The appropriating consciousness is profound and subtle;
All seeds flow from this like a river stream;
That it would be unsuited if it's conceived of as the self,
To the childish I have not taught this.⁴⁸³

These are cited [as the sutras] in the commentary. Thus in this sutra a discrimination is made in terms of the imputed nature as not existing by virtue of self-defining characteristics and the dependent nature as existing by virtue of its own characteristic. Although for this system existence by virtue of self-defining characteristics remain impossible for imputations like the two selfhoods as well as imputations pertaining to identity and properties, many of the imputations pertaining to identity and properties do exist as established basis. In this sutra although the dependent nature and the consummate nature are stated to be existing by virtue of self-defining characteristics, the reason why only dependent nature is mentioned in the commentary is because the dependent nature is the primary object of dispute with respect to true existence or its lack of it between Madhyamika and the Mind Only school. This is because the dependent nature is the basis of designation of the imputed nature and the consummate nature too must be posited in dependence upon the dependent nature. Such differentiation too is held to be provisional by this system [of Candrakirti].

(2) Again the presentation of foundational consciousness that is of separate reality from the six operative consciousnesses in such lines as “The appropriating consciousness ...” where eightfold consciousness is described, this too is interpreted [here] as a provisional meaning. And foundational consciousness does not exist the afflicted consciousness cannot be posited as well. “And so on” includes the following two [sections] – (3) the rejection of external reality in that sutra and (4) the statement of there being three ultimate vehicles. So there are four [parts of the sutra] that must be explained as provisional. [324]

Seeing that if one fails to cultivate a decisive understanding of these issues one does not comprehend the Middle Way and the Mind Only philosophies in general and in particular the unique points of this system [of Prasaṅgika], I have explained these in detail in *Clear Differentiation of the Definitive and the Interpretable Meanings*.⁴⁸⁴

As for which words in *Unravelling the Thought* sutra nonexistence of external reality is presented, it is those like the following cited in *A Summary of the Great Vehicle* states:

⁴⁸³ Check source * *dgongz 'grel?*

⁴⁸⁴ For detailed analysis of these sections of *Unravelling the Thought* sutra as well as other sutras that the Mind Only uphold as definitive, especially the Prasaṅgika-Madhyamaka arguments to demonstrate these as constituting provisional statements, see Tsonkhapa's *Essence of True Eloquence*, pp.* For an English translation, see Thurman, p.*

“Blessed One, this reflective image (*gzugs brnyan*) that is the object of experience of meditative absorption, would you say that it is distinct from the mind, or you would say that it does not exist as distinct from the mind?” The Blessed One replied: “Maitreya, I shall say that it is not distinct. Why is this so? Because I have stated that consciousness is defined purely in terms of clear cognition of its objective focus.⁴⁸⁵

This tradition [of Prasaṅgika] interprets all four points cited above as provisional; it does not engage in interpreting some as provisional and some as definitive. Also, as for the statement of there being three ultimate vehicles, thinking that this can be understood on the basis of Noble Nāgārjuna himself having established the singularity of ultimate vehicle in his *Compendium of Sutras*,⁴⁸⁶ it is not mentioned in the commentary on *Entering the Middle Way*. Of the three remaining [points], the following [passage of] *Descent into Laṅkā* is the elucidation that the presentation that there is no external reality and the mind only exists intrinsically:

Just as to the patient, the one is sick,
The physician administers medicine,
Likewise for the sake of sentient beings
The Buddha taught mind only as well.⁴⁸⁷

The giving of medicine to individual patients cannot be done in an independent way; it must conform to the nature of the sickness of the patients. In the same way, the teaching of mind only too is not done in an independent way; it is described as being done due to the power of the mentalities of the spiritual trainees. [325] Therefore, we come to recognize that the former scriptural citation is provisional.

Following the citation “Just as to the patient, ...” in the commentary to *Entering the Middle Way*, it reads “In the same way, the Blessed One ...” and cites what is stated in *Descent into Laṅkā* up to “How can one attain full awakening?”⁴⁸⁸ This [citation from the sutra] is the scriptural citation indicating how foundational consciousness, which the Consciousness Only school hold to be definitive is [actually] provisional.

Here, the *Explanation of the Commentary* asserts that the expression “In the same way” indicates that just as the teaching of eternal essence is provisional in the same way the teaching of mind only is shown to be provisional. This is a distorted utterance. For the commentary expounds this clearly in the sense of “Just as the teaching of mind only is provisional, in the same manner...” So just as the lines “Just as to the patient, ...” explains the teaching of mind only as provisional, in the same manner, the statement of eternal essence as being provisional too establishes the teaching of foundational consciousness in sutras such as *Unravelling the Thought* as nonliteral. For this one must

⁴⁸⁵ Give both sutra source and state: Cited in *Mahāyānaśāstra*, Tengyur, sems tsam, p.*

⁴⁸⁶ *Sōtrasamuccaya*, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁴⁸⁷ *Laṅkāvatīrasūtra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, p.*

⁴⁸⁸ MABh, p.*

first recognize the teaching of eternal essence as nonliteral. [In this regard the Buddha] states in *Descent into La°ka*:

The sutra teaches just as in accordance with the natural inclination and mentality of the sentient beings; in terms of its content, it is erroneous. It is not a discourse of suchness. For example, the mirage does not exist as water so it deceives those animals that cling it to be water. Likewise, the teaching thus taught will please the childish; it is not a discourse that will amuse the Noble One's gnosis. Therefore, you should follow after the truth and not be attached to the words.⁴⁸⁹

And:

Great intelligence, the essence of Tat>gatha that has been taught in the sutras speaks of it as naturally radiant, utterly pure since beginningless, endowed with the thirty two exemplary marks of a noble person, which exist within the bodies of all sentient beings. [326] Like a precious gem wrapped inside a tainted cloth, if it is spoken of as [something] that is permanent, eternal, and immutable (*ther zug*) wrapped inside the clothe of aggregates and sense bases and remains tainted by stains, so how is this proposition of essence not similar to the *Tirthika*'s proposition of self?⁴⁹⁰

Thus a question is posed. In response, when explaining that such teaching is not literal and that it is not similar to the *Tirthika*'s self, [it explains that] the intended basis from the point of view of which it is taught is selflessness of phenomena, namely emptiness, signlessness and wishlessness. The purpose for which it is taught is to help the childish to overcome the fear of those who are afraid of selflessness and to gradually lead the *Tirthikas* who manifestly cling to propositions of self and those who are habituated in the past to their views to suchness. So for their sake [the Buddha] taught the existence of essence that is permanent, eternal and immutable. So, [the sutra] states, the bodhisattvas of present and future must not cling to it as self. For if one holds this in accordance with the literal meaning, since this will be similar to clinging to the *Tirthika*'s self, the meaning is that one must not cling to its literal [meaning]. The actual objection to the literal meaning is that if one accepts this literally there will be no difference with the *Tirthika*'s self. As I have explained these extensively elsewhere, I shall not elaborate further.⁴⁹¹

In the commentary, it cites, again in that sutra it states:

Great intelligence, this emptiness, nonarising, nonduality, and what is characterized by no intrinsic existence, which is contained in the sutras, is taught.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁹ *La°k>vat>rasÒtra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, p.*

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., p.*

⁴⁹¹ See, for example, Tsongkhapa's own *Essence of Eloquence*, pp.* English translation, Thurman, pp.*

⁴⁹² *La°k>vat>rasÒtra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, p.* Cited in MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

After citing this, [the commentary] reads:

Therefore, having clearly revealed all similar sutras accepted by the Mind Only school as definitive alone as being provisional by means of this scriptural citation,
...⁴⁹³

Those sutras that are similar to this does not refer [327] to the two segments of *Descent into La^oka* which has been just cited. Both these [segments] are not accepted by the Mind Only school as being definitive and also, earlier in the commentary, these were explicitly explained to be [from the sutra] *Unravelling the Thought*.⁴⁹⁴ Those who interpret the reference of “by means of this scriptural citation” as being the section on the rejection of creation in the contemplation of dependent origination in *The Ten Levels* sutra is utterly acceptable. The rejection of another creator is presented as the explanatory reason to prove that the term “only” in the statement “mind only” in *The Ten Levels* sutra does not negate external reality; it is not an explanatory reason to prove that the rejection of external reality is provisional. Therefore, there are three scriptural citations being referred to in the line in the root text “*They are revealed to be provisional by this citation.*”⁴⁹⁵ Of these, (1) the demonstration of the mind only with rejection of external reality is done by the four [citations], such as “Just as to the patient, ...” (2) The demonstration of foundational consciousness as provisional is [done by] the scriptural citation that presents the permanent and eternal essence as provisional. How does the fact that permanent and eternal essence is provisional establish foundational consciousness to be provisional? *Densely Arrayed Sutra* states:

The grounds are the foundation of all diverse forms;
The virtuous essence of Tat^ogatha is that too;
This essence is taught by the Tat^ogathas
In the language of foundation-of-all.
That the essence is labelled as foundation-of-all,
This the weak mind does not know.⁴⁹⁶

In *Descent into La^oka* too, it reads “The essence of Tat^ogatha, which is proclaimed as foundational consciousness together with sevenfold consciousness”⁴⁹⁷ thus these two are mentioned many times as synonymous. However, of these two since one is spoken of as permanent and the other as impermanent, so the literal references of the two are not presented as identical. Nevertheless, the basis on which essence has been taught is the very point on the basis of which foundational consciousness was taught. So from the point of the view of this [shared] intended reference, they are synonymous and share the same reference. [328] Therefore, by demonstrating the first to be provisional this itself establishes the second too to be provisional. The commentary states:

⁴⁹³ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁹⁴ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁹⁵ MA, 6:*

⁴⁹⁶ rgyan stug po bkod pa, ?

⁴⁹⁷ La^ok>vat>rasōtra, Kangyur, p.*

Because it follows after the nature all entities, recognize that it is emptiness alone that is presented by the term “foundational consciousness.”⁴⁹⁸

So it is by relating this well with the demonstration of the teaching of permanent and eternal essence as provisional it is necessary to realize how that scriptural citation reveals foundational consciousness to be provisional.

(3) Immediately following the passage “Great intelligence, this emptiness, .. contained in ..”⁴⁹⁹ in that same sutra, it reads “Whatever sutra it may be, you should comprehend this meaning alone in them.”⁵⁰⁰ This is the scriptural citation that demonstrates the teaching that discriminates between the first two natures in terms of existence or nonexistence by virtue of self-defining characteristics.

b’) Presenting that it is provisional by means of reasoning

Now to elucidate through reasoning how statement of mind only is provisional, it states:

**If there is no cognizable object then dispelling of cognition
Is easily obtained so the Buddha taught;
If there is no cognizable object negation of cognition is established;
So first the cognizable object is negated.**

Now, just as for those who have accumulated the merits first, as a means to easily enter into suchness, they are related to the discourse on giving and so on, likewise the Buddhas help those trainees who are not capable of realizing the complete meaning of the profound [suchness] right from start gradually towards the realization of no intrinsic existence. To these [kind of trainees] if the absence of knowable objects is taught first, the Buddha has said, after this the elimination of the intrinsic existence of consciousness will then be easily found. This being so, the absence of knowable object – that is the negation of external reality first – constitutes a means for a full realization of selflessness. Therefore, the Buddhas have taught the negation of external reality alone first for if there is no knowable object, that is for those who have cognized the no self of external reality, the negation of consciousness, namely the no-self of consciousness will be easily established. [329] Of those who have cognized no intrinsic existence of external reality, some will realize no intrinsic existence of cognition on their own; while some will realize this on the basis of little demonstration by others. That [the statements of] non-existence of external reality and intrinsic existence of cognition are provisional is stated clearly in the following in *A Commentary on the Awakening Mind*:

“All of this is but mind only,”
That which was stated by the Sage
Is to alleviate the fear of the childish;

⁴⁹⁸ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, p.*

⁴⁹⁹ This is a reference to the segment from *Descent into La°ka*, which was cited earlier on p.*

⁵⁰⁰ *La°k>vat>rasÒtra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, p.*

It is not [a statement] of [final] truth.⁵⁰¹

□ryadeva too states this explicitly in his *Compendium of the Heart of Gnosis* as well.⁵⁰²

2') Presenting the method of understanding the provisional and definitive meanings of the sutras

To present that those with wisdom should demonstrate the other provisional scriptures that do not explicitly teach suchness in its entirety in the same mode, it reads:

**Thus having understood this story of the scriptures,
Those sutras that present that which is not suchness,
Examine these to be provisional and interpret accordingly;
Know that those with emptiness as content are definitive.**

Thus having understood the story or the presentation of the provisional or definitive nature of the scriptures as explained earlier, one should realize those sutras that have as their content or subject matter expositions of points that do not constitute suchness – those which teach provisional [truths] and do not explicitly elucidate [the truth of] dependent origination characterized in terms of no arising and so on – to be provisional and interpret these as such. These should be recognized as being similar to those that are causes for entering into the realization of no intrinsic existence. *Praise to the World Transcendent* states:

If the eyes do not grasp the elements,
How can the eyes grasp what originates from them?
When this is taught with regard to matter,
You dissolved grasping at material form.⁵⁰³

In the sutras too, it states that the fact of impermanence is a nonexistent fact.⁵⁰⁴

That the first citation becomes a substantiation is this. In the Abhidharma [basket] the Blessed One taught that the four elements are tactile phenomena that are not the objects of the eyes, while their derivative, [330] the visible form is an object graspable by the eyes. While one must accept both these [statements], yet when revealing their suchness, if these were to exist by means of their own essence, one will have to admit that either the elements are graspable by the eyes or that the object, [the visible form], is not graspable by the eyes. When one comes to recognize this one will then understand that the former statements do not present [their] suchness. Thus one will realize their suchness afresh and recognize the former statements to be a means of entering into that suchness.

⁵⁰¹ *Bodhicittavaraṇa*, 27.

⁵⁰² * * Tengyur, *

⁵⁰³ * Tengyur, *

⁵⁰⁴ * Kangur, check

The meaning of the second citation is, as before, to understand the presentation of things as arising and disintegrating in terms of the meaning of no intrinsic existence. Those sutras that carry the truth of the emptiness of intrinsic existence of person and phenomena, that it those that explicitly present these as their subject matter, these one should understand to be definitive. In that this is so, the *King of Meditations* states:

Emptiness as explained by the Tatagṛtha,
Recognize the distinctions of definitive sutras;
Where sentience, persons and individuals are presented,
Recognize all these teachings to be provisional.⁵⁰⁵

“The distinction of sutras” here refer to their characteristics that differ from the provisional sutras. The presentation of persons is only an illustration; they also present the existence of the agent, the object of action, and the acts. This then is a source for the method of positing the sutras into the twofold provisional and definitive classes. Again the same sutra states:

In the thousands of world systems
All the teachings I have taught,
They’re different words but one theme;
[But] this cannot be proclaimed.

If one contemplates this one thing,
All of these are meditated upon;
So the numerous teachings of all the Buddhas,
All of these that have been taught,

It’s the no-self all phenomena. [331]
A person who is versed in the meanings,
If he trains in this theme,
Finding the Buddha’s qualities will not hard.⁵⁰⁶

The four lines beginning with “In the thousand world systems” means the following. Of all those sutras that have been taught, those that explicitly elucidate ultimate truth directly engage (*gzhol ba*) with suchness while those that do not present this, even the provisional ones, indirectly engage with suchness. So they share equal in engaging with suchness. Therefore, it states, given that those on the beginner’s level who are training in the path can never enquire after all the sutras that exist in the universe, so one should enquire into suchness on the basis of any one given sutra. This can be understood in that this [sutra] is cited to substantiate the point that one must explain even those [sutras] that do not explicitly present suchness as conditions for entering into suchness.

The two lines beginning with “If one contemplates this one thing” has the following meaning. If one meditates upon the suchness of one subject through excellent

⁵⁰⁵ * Kangur,

⁵⁰⁶ Ibid., p.* This citation is found in Candrakīrti’s commentary.

understanding this would constitute meditating upon the suchness all the subjects, so it is not necessary to meditate individually upon the suchness of each and every individual subject. That when one meditates upon [the suchness of] one entity this constitutes meditating upon [the suchness of] all entities, this is presented by the three lines beginning with “So the numerous teachings of all the Buddhas.” With respect to this teaching, the statement that [all of this is] no-self of phenomena does not assert that only one factor is adequate for the class of vast practices pertaining to the subjects. Just as *The Lamp of Moon* presents the method of defining provisional and definitive [scriptures], one should understand the extensive presentations found in sutras such as *Questions of Akṛāyṃati*. These have already been explained decisively in my *Differentiation of the Interpretable and the Definitive*.⁵⁰⁷

“I shall explain a part of this”⁵⁰⁸ indicates a cursory explanation in response to the following qualm: “If you interpret the explanation of the three natures found in *Unravelling the Intention* as provisional, what is the manner in which these three are defined in your own system.” [332] For example, the “snake” is falsely imputed upon the coiled rope and it does not exist upon that rope. However, it is perfectly established with respect to an actual snake; it is not imputed despite its nonexistence. Likewise, with respect to the nature that is the true mode of character (*gshis lugs*), for the conditioned dependent [things] it is an imputation despite its nonexistence. *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* states [for instance]:

Nature is uncontrived,
It’s non contingent upon others.⁵⁰⁹

So, as stated here, the essence of the true mode of character is not something that is created. That which is imputed as the true mode of character upon dependently originated conditioned things, those that can be apprehended or seen, which resemble mirror reflections, this nature is, within the sphere of the Buddha’s seeing of reality-as-it-is, actually the true mode of character. There it is not imputed despite its nonexistence. Because their gnosis actualizes the nature alone without touching the entities created by causes and conditions and so embody suchness within their mind, they are called “the Awakened Ones.” As for critical analysis of ignorance, this shall be explained later.

Thus, [Candrakīrti] states, “So having realized the presentation of the three natures I shall explain the intention of the sutras.”⁵¹⁰ On the basis of this mode of explanation, one should also understand the intention of the three characteristics presented in the chapter on the “Questions of Maitreya” as well.⁵¹¹ One should also understand [on this basis] that

⁵⁰⁷ See, especially, pp.*.* For English translation of this section, see Thurman, op cit., p.*

⁵⁰⁸ This is reference to Candrakīrti’s auto-commentary. See p.* The following two paragraphs including the quotation from Nagārjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* represent a close paraphrase from Candrakīrti’s commentary.

⁵⁰⁹ MMK, 15:*

⁵¹⁰ MABh, p.*

⁵¹¹ This is a chapter from the sutra *Unravelling the Intention [of the Buddha]*. For a detailed analysis of the presentation of the three characteristics in this chapter and its comparison with the three

the intention of the teaching of the three natures in *Unravelling the Intention* [sutra] is provisional. [Furthermore] one also needs to reflect upon or examine what the Mind Only school takes to be the imputed [nature], that is the imputation of subject and object as being of different entity upon the dependent as its basis. For the two, the grasped and the grasped, are dependent [entities] and as for dependent [realities] other than these two, they do not exist as facts. [333] As for the presentation of the three natures presented in the “Questions of Maitreya” and the three natures of *Unravelling the Intention*, I have already explained them decisively in my *Differentiation of the Interpretable and the Definitive*.⁵¹²

natures presented elsewhere, see Tsongkhapa’s *Essence of True Eloquence*, pp.*. For English translation, see Thurman, op cit., p.*

⁵¹² See above note.

The Sixth Ground V

Negating Arising from Both and from No Cause

c' Refuting arising from both

The Jainas who propound arising from both poles of arising-from-oneself and arising-from-another, when they [perceive] the origination of a vase from such factors as a mass of clay, the [beating] stick, the wheel, the thread, water, and the potter, they come to think that because the clay pot arises only in terms of the reality of a clay, it arises from itself. And because factors which are other [than the clay], such as the activity of the potter give rise to the clay pot it arises from another as well. So just as in the case of external things, with respect to inner [experiences] too they arise from both self and others.

Here, [the Jainas] present nine categories [of reality which are] (1) the “person,” “self,” the cherished “life” as well as (2) the “faculties” other than the life-force, (3) the “wholesome factors” that establish higher rebirth and definite goodness and (4) the “unwholesome factors” that their opposites, (5) the “contamination” of the afflictions as well as (6) the “vows” that restrain against immorality, and so on, which include (7) “happiness” and (8) “suffering,” and (9) the “force” that coheres that arises from cognition as well as acts as its cause. On this basis, [they assert] because Maitreya has taken birth in this life through existing as embodying life-force throughout other lifetimes as well, he arises from himself. For Maitreya and his life-force are not two separate [entities]. Since life-force possesses the movement from one birth to another that it travels into migrations as celestial beings and so forth, so the opponent asserts. Also since Maitreya arises from other [than himself], such as his parents, from the wholesome and unwholesome factors, the contaminations and so on, he arises from another as well. Therefore, they assert, as I do not assert arising separately from self or another the earlier individual refutation of arising from self and another does not harm us. [To counter this] it reads:

**Arising from both too is not logical because
All the cited objections will befall upon this.**

Not only is arising from each [of the two self and another] illogical, arising from the combination of the two – self and another – too is not something that is logical. This is because the objections already presented before to each [of the two] befall upon this standpoint of arising from both. For example, if Maitreya is asserted to be self-arising due to [his arising from his] life-force, this would be refuted through such [arguments] as then there will be not purpose for its arising and so on. And if he is asserted to be arising-from-another due to [his arising from his] parents, this would be refuted through such [arguments] as the absurd consequences.

Just as it has been revealed before that arising from self and another is illogical on the worldly conventional level as well as on the ultimate level, here too, to summarize with the statement that arising from both is impossible, it reads:

**This is not accepted by the world nor in terms of suchness;
Because arising does not exist from each of these two.**

Arising from both self and another does not exist even from the perspective of the world nor is it accepted on the level of suchness, that is the ultimate level. Given that arising from self or another is not established individually arising from both too remains illogical.

d' Refuting arising from no cause

Here the Cṛvākas who propound [the theory of] natural origination assert the following. If arising is due to causes, then from the point of view of the effect it would arise either from itself, from another or from both both so these objections [raised earlier] will apply. However, as I did not accept arising [of things] from cause I do not have the faults presented to all these three positions. For example, one does not see anyone make the rough and soft textures of the stem and petals of the lotus [respectively] nor does one see anyone make the diverse shapes and colors of the petals, pixels and the stamens of the lotus. This is true also of the diverse aspects of *panasa* fruits and apples. Just as in the case of these external things, in relation to those that share inner nature, such as peacocks, *titiri* birds, *bya gag*, [335] one does not observe someone diligently catching them and sculpting their shapes and [painting their] colors. Therefore, the arising of things is purely by nature. To this I shall state this:

**If there is an arising from no cause alone,
In that case everything will arise from everything else at all times;**

If things come to arise only from no cause, in that case things could arise from all things, that is from everything, including those that are not their causes as well since they are all equal in being not a cause. Also, [the existence of] ripened mangoes and so on which are contingent upon season and can be seen only at specific time, these too would exist at all times. Because [according to you] they are not contingent upon season. Likewise, the crows too would possess peacock feathers and the peacocks too would possess parrot's feathers even in its womb stage. This is because these are not contingent upon their causes.

Thus, having explained how this [position] contradicts reason, to say how this [position] contradicts what is seen, it reads:

**Then for the sake of bringing about effects this world
Will not gather seeds and so on through hundredfold [means].**

If the sentient beings are devoid of their causes,

**And if they're ungraspable like the blue lotuses in the sky,
Since you grasp at the colorful world [of experience],
Like your own cognition know that the world originates from its causes.**

[According to you] the worldly people would not gather seeds and so forth through a hundredfold hardships for the sake of fruits such as [a bountiful] harvest in the fall. However, because such endeavors do take place arising [of things] do not take place by itself. There are other flaws as well. For if beings are devoid of cause, that is if they originate with no cause, these beings will be like ungraspable like the odor and color of a blue lotus in the sky. However, given that [we do] apprehend a world that is most vibrant, so just as one's cognition that assumes the aspect of blue [color] arises from a blue object, you [Carvaka] should understand that the entire world arise from their causes alone.

According to C>rv>ka there are four realities, which serve as the cause of all the diverse sentient beings, [336] referred to as "earth," "water," "fire," and "wind." It is through specific modes of maturation of these [four elements] one sees such diverse world as peacocks, *bya gag*, and so on, which is not only certainly tenable, the fact of the awareness being the cognizer of the reality of such diverse things too arises from these [four elements] alone. Just as from the transformation of specific elements coming into contact in alcholo the potency to intoxicate that cause intoxication and loss of consciousness for living beings arise, likewise, from transformation of specific factors of the great elements, such as *nur nur po* and so on, cognitions come to arise. These then evolve up to the point when they come to cognize all the things. Therefore, the things of [both] external and inner world, they originate only from the causes of this world alone. There is no such thing as the world beyond that involve the occurrence in this life of the fruitional effects of acts done [in the past] or the occurrence in another world the fruitional effects of acts done in this life. So they think.⁵¹³

The say:

Enjoy women well and indulge in gourmet;
This excellent body once gone you'll not find;
This body is only a collection [of elements];
[With] dangers not gone [before] it will not be lost.⁵¹⁴

This statement is made [by the speaker] with the intention of copulating with [his own daughter] and with the desire to understand that there is no world beyond for his daughter. Naktso translates this [last] line as "No dangers of the past will come about."

To this we shall ask the following. "Your certainty that there is no world beyond, on what reason is [this based]?" If it is thought because the world beyond cannot be seen at

⁵¹³ This and the subsequent two more paragraphs up to the end of second stanza that is cited to represent the view of C>rv>ka represent close paraphrasing from Candrakīrti's autocommentary (pp.*) with minor additions from Tsongkhapa.

⁵¹⁴ See if this is cited in MABh and especially *Tarkajvala*.*

present. [337] This not seeing the world beyond, is this a direct perception or [a cognition] that is not a direct perception? If you reply “It is a direct perception,” in that case if you assert the reversal of direct seeing as a direct perception, then there will be no contradiction for a nonentity in being a direct perception. Therefore, for you, something that is not an entity will also be an entity. [For example] the reversal of direct seeing of the world beyond is, just like an entity, an actual object of direct perception. In that case, there would be no “nonentity” at all so entities too would not exist because its pair of contrast (*zla bo*) does not exist. And if these two do not exist the four elements will not exist so your thesis that the world beyond does not exist too will be undermined.

If, on the other hand, [this not seeing of the world beyond] is not a direct perception, in that case since it will not be an evident fact it will not be apprehended by direct valid cognition. So, without apprehending it, how is the absence of world beyond inferred? If it is claimed “it is apprehended by inferential cognition,” in general not only through direct perception, but also through inferential cognitions as well the aims of people are accomplished, however, this inferential cognition is something that you [Cṛvṛka] does not accept! You assert:

However much is within the sphere of the senses,
Individuals remain only within that domain;
The maiden who claims of wide learning,
This is similar to a wolf’s howling.⁵¹⁵

Thus you have asserted that the valid cognitions by means of which people realize their aims is confined to the direct perceptions that see whatever is found within the sphere of the senses.

**If these elements are not of the nature of that reality
That made them to be the objects of your cognition,
Then to such a person who possesses dense darkness of mind,
He will never perfectly realize the world beyond.**

**When he rejects the world beyond he should be recognized
As having viewed the nature of reality distortedly;
He thus come to possess a body that shares similar status as that view;
This is like when accepting existence of self-existence of the elements.**

If the four elements, such as earth, which are presented in your texts and through whose reality they come to be the objects of your cognition, if they do not exist in such nature as [observed by your cognition], then you who possesses such thick mental darkness with respect to what are very coarse facts, how can you correctly understand very subtle facts like the existence or nonexistence of the world beyond? [338] This is not possible. There is also the further fault that when refuting the world beyond he [Cṛvṛka] must be recognized as distorted in his view of the nature of the objects of knowledge. This is because he possesses a body heap that resembles or is equivalent to a cause that is the

⁵¹⁵ This stanza is cited in MABh as well. See if it is in Tarkajvala*

support of the view denigrating the world beyond. This is like, for example, when he accepts the reality of the elements as true existence.

If they assert “Even when one cognizes the elements to be true existence this is seen by an undistorted [perception] so the example [given] is devoid of the probandum,” this too cannot be so. This is because [you Cṛvka] have conceived the elements that are intrinsically unborn and [intrinsically] existent to be intrinsic existence and arising so that you view [reality] distortedly is established. This [response] indicates that in the case of one’s own valid syllogisms what is chosen as the example must not be devoid of the propandum. While they are equal in being cited as a reasoning proof, earlier it was also explained how presenting “being a visible object of eye consciousness” as the reasoning sign is an unestablished proof so it demonstrates also how to establish a thesis through a reasoning proof the three modes [of the reasoning] are necessary. If [you] assert that the elements are intrinsically unborn needs to be established, I say:

**That such elements do not exist has already been explained.
Because earlier arising from self, another and both,
As well as no cause have been collectively refuted,
So those elements not mentioned [so far] too does not exist.**

That these elements do not exist by means of their intrinsic nature is something I have already explained before. For example, when arising from self, another, both or from no cause is refuted, the intrinsic arising of the elements too was already negated collectively, that is in general. Therefore, given that these elements, for example, as well as everything has been negated in a generic way, there is nothing that has not been indicated. So the example [I have cited earlier] holds. [339]

Similarly, when refuting denigration of omniscience as well other tenets of those who propound natural [origination of] things, in these cases too, one should extend [the argument] that their understandings are distorted. For example, one should relate in the following manner:

When he rejects Fully Awakened One he should be recognized
As having viewed the nature of reality distortedly;
He thus come to possess a body that shares similar status as that view;
This is like when accepting existence of self-existence of the elements.⁵¹⁶

This is because we wish to refute all [standpoints] that view in terms of existence and nonexistence. Now, if you [Cṛvka] assert that this consequence applies to you [Madhyamaka] as well, [I shall respond] “There exists no example to establish that we are distorted.” We can say:

⁵¹⁶ This way of extending the same argument against rejection of Fully Awakened Buddha on the basis of changing the first line of this stanza is done by Candrakīrti himself in his autocommentary (pp.*). Taking this suggestion, Tsongkhapa applies the same approach to the rejection of after life and omniscience and proposes the two additional stanzas.

When we understand that there is a different world,
We realize the ultimate that is the nature of objects of knowledge;
For we possess a body that shares status similar to our view;
This is like when we have accepted having realized no self.

Likewise, [we could say]:

When we understand that omniscience exists,
We realize the ultimate that is the nature of object of knowledge;

The reasoning proof and example remain the same. Similarly, we can extend this “All entities” as well. Therefore this method establishes thoroughly the four theses that have been proposed [earlier] in the lines

Not originating from itself, as for originating another, how can this be?
Not also from both, how can there be from without a cause?⁵¹⁷

So, as stated here, pray do not say that we refute other’s standpoints but do not establish our own standpoints.

3’ The conclusion of having negated arising from the four extremes

This I shall state thus. If asked, “If things do not arise from themselves, another, both or from no cause, how do they arise then?” I shall say this. If some intrinsic nature exists in the things, no alternative conceptions of arising is possible so without doubt either arising from self, another, both or from no cause will be observed. Even according to those who assert the things to appear to arise from ÈŸvara and so on, ÈŸvara and so on will be either self, another, or both. Therefore, even those who propose ÈŸvara and so on to be the cause do not escape the objections already raised [earlier]. Thus there is no another fifth factor that can be conceived of as the cause. Given that there is no another alternative, so refuting the arising from the four concepts [of causation] it demonstrates that things do not possess intrinsic arising. To state this, it reads:

**Because there is no arising from self, another and both,
And not contingent upon causes, things are devoid of intrinsic existence;**

This is because there is no arising from self, another, both or from non contingency upon a cause, things are free of intrinsic existence. This I shall say.

Although arising from four extremes has been negated through consequential reasoning, this [above statement] show on the basis of what kind of reasoning proof inferential cognition arises at the end. Here, “no arising from the four extremes is the reasoning proof,” “entities” is the subject, and “being free of intrinsic existence” is the thesis.

(ii) Repudiation of objections against refuting thus

⁵¹⁷ MA, 6 : *

This has two parts:

- 1' The actual point
- 2' Presenting that point by means of a summary

The first is as follows. If things such such that they have no intrinsic arising, how are unborn [things] like blue [object] apprehended? Whatever may be the [ultimate] nature of things such as blue, [341] it is not an object perceptible to those who are tainted by ignorance. So everyday cognitions like the eye consciousness do not apprehend the intrinsic nature of such things as blue. In that case what could it likely be that is seen again and again in one's presence in the form of an object? Given that this is perceived through the power of distortion, it is not the nature. Only through contamination of ignorance it is observed as its reality. To indicate, I say:

**Because dense delusion resembling clusters of clouds exist
In the world the objects are perceived in distorted ways.**

Given that the world of sentient beings possess dense or thick delusion that resembles a [dense] mass of rain clouds and veils over the nature from seeing it, for the childish there is no [possibility of] seeing the nature of blue and so on. This source that [leads] the childish to manifestly cling to the objects in a distorted manner, this [delusion] is observed in the childish who cling to true existence.

If enquired, "Even if one allows that because of being covered by delusion [the childish] do not see suchness, why is it that they see it in a distorted manner?" To demonstrate by means of an analogy that it is due to the power of delusion [the childish] perceive what is not intrinsic existence as one, it reads:

**Just through the power cataracts some perceive apprehend
Falling hair, double moon, peacock feathers, flies and so on,
Likewise through the power of delusion those who are unwise
Perceive conditioned things and diverse [forms] with their mind.**

**If they originate in dependence on delusion and not when
There is no delusion, doubtless they're perceived by the unwise alone;
The wise who dispel the thick darkness with the sun of their intelligence,
They comprehend emptiness and become free.**

**"If things do not exist in terms of suchness,
Even conventionally, like the son of a barren woman,
They will thus be nonexistent;
So they exist by means of intrinsic nature."**

Just as through the power of one's senses being infected with cataracts some individuals who have cataracts falsely apprehend or see such things as falling hair, double moon,

peacock feathers and flies despite their nonexistence, likewise, due to the power of delusion the cognitions of the unwise, the ordinary beings, cognize or see not only conditioned things like blue but diverse things. This is stated by the Blessed One in the following in *Sutra on Dependent Origination* [341] where it reads “Due to the condition of ignorance volitions ...,” likewise “This person who follows after ignorance comes to form merits, comes to form demerits, and comes to form unwavering [karma],” and similarly “From the cessation of ignorance volition comes to cease.”⁵¹⁸

Therefore, this statement that it is in this manner that on the basis of delusion of ignorance that volitional act come about and without delusion such karmic act does not come about, this is without doubt understood or stated from the point of view of the unwise [childish beings] alone. The wise, on the other hand, when he see statements such as “Due to the condition of ignorance volition forms,” not only will they comprehend the volitions as emptiness with no intrinsic existence, with the sun of excellent intelligence realizing the suchness of dependent origination they will thoroughly dispel ignorance that resembles a dense darkness. They will not appropriate the volitional acts as well for they have abandoned ignorance that is cause for appropriating such karmic acts. Therefore they shall definitely gain freedom from the cycle of existence. *Condensed Perfection of Wisdom* states:

Some bodhisattva will understand through this wisdom
That dependent originations have no arising and no cessation,
So like the shining of sun in a cloudless [sky] dispels darkness,
Destroying ignorance darkness they'll attain self-origination.⁵¹⁹

[Qualm:] “If things such as form do not exist in terms of suchness, that is on the ultimate level, and possess no intrinsic nature at all, then just like the son of a barren woman, even on the conventional level the nature or essence of things such as blue will not be existent. However, given that the nature of things such as form do exist on the conventional level, [343] their existence must be intrinsic, that is that it must be the only one which exists on the ultimate level.”

[Response:] To this I shall say:

**First ask those who are infected with cataracts
And [perceive] objects such as falling hairs and so on,
Which are unborn [yet are seen], then you can ask
About those pertaining to the cataract of ignorance.**

The objects of the cognitions of those who have cataracts, such as falling hair, because they are unborn and insofar as they are unborn they are equal with the son of a barren woman. So you should first enquire with those whose eyes are affected by cataracts and

⁵¹⁸ Kangyur, *. *

⁵¹⁹ Kangyur, shes phyin, * “Self origination” is most probably an abbreviation of “gnosis of self origination” (*rang 'byung ye shes*), which refers to advanced levels of realization on the bodhisattva path.

so on why is it that they see objects such as falling hair that do not exist and not son of a barren woman. After this you can enquire after the question of why, despite being equal in being intrinsically unborn, you see [visible] forms and so on but not the son of a barren woman. In this way, you can dispute with and examine those who follow after ignorance, that is whose eyes of intelligence are obscured by ignorance. As for us, this is not a matter of dispute and argument. For us the yogis have seen the things in such light and others [like ourselves] who desire to obtain the gnosis of the yogis should develop special conviction in the manner in which the nature of phenomena has been described. Thus in exact accordance with the scriptures, it is by means of comprehending [suchness] with the yogi's gnosis, we engage in explaining the absence of intrinsic existence of things. It is not on the basis of one's own cognitions for our eyes of intelligence are obscured by the cataracts of ignorance.⁵²⁰ This is as stated in the following:

Aggregates are devoid of intrinsic nature and empty;
 Enlightenment is devoid of intrinsic nature and empty;
 He who experiences it is devoid of intrinsic nature and empty;
 This is known by one who possesses gnosis, not the childish.

They will know the nature of gnosis [too] to be empty;
 And having known the nature of knowables to be empty,
 If they realize them as similar to the knower, [344]
 They shall be called "experiencing the path of enlightenment."⁵²¹

Therefore, this [question of no intrinsic existence] is not a matter to be disputed and argued with the yogis. As for them, they do not see any intrinsic nature with respect to some phenomena even on the conventional level; and on the ultimate level they do not see [it upon] anything. For the time being, you [Cṛvka] should set aside viewing those with cataracts as objects of dispute and argumentation; this is something that needs to be disputed and argued with you yourself. To state this, it reads:

**If dream [objects], Gandarva cities, mirage water,
 Magical conjurations, mirror reflections and so on
 Are perceived unborn and are equal in being nonexistent,
 How can they be so for you? This is illogical.**

**So although they do not arise so in terms of suchness,
 They are not like the son of a barren woman
 Which is not an object seen by the world;
 Therefore your proposition lacks conclusiveness.**

"When one sees unborn, that is nonexistent things like dream houses and families as well as Gandarva cities, or when one sees men and women conjured by a magician, or mirage

⁵²⁰ This entire paragraph the subsequent one together with the citation from the sutra in between represent a close paraphrasing from Candrakīrti's autocommentary (pp.*).

⁵²¹ *mdo sdud pa or Samadhiraja, Kangyur, *

as water, or mirror reflection as a face, ‘and so on’ includes echoes and magical emanations, and so on, although they are all equal in being nonexistent, how is it that you see these things yet you do not see a son of a barren woman? This is illogical.” Thus you should first argue with your own self. Afterwards you can then dispute and argue with me. Therefore, although in terms of suchness form and so on do not possess arising in any sense, given that it is not like the son of a barren woman that cannot be an object of seeing by the world, so even though they do not exist on the ultimate level this does make them not seeable even on the conventional level like the son of a barren woman. This proposition of yours constitute an inconclusive reasoning proof. It is erroneous. The Blessed One too states:

The beings are spoken of as dream-like;
They’re not presented in terms of suchness;
In a dream where there are no entities,
One with a distorted mind clings to them.

However much one may perceive the Gandarva city,
No such city exists in ten directions nor elsewhere;
This city is posited merely in name alone; [345]
Likewise the Thatgata sees the beings.

Though someone thinking of water
May see it there is no water in a mirage;
Likewise someone thoroughly stirred by concepts
Sees what is not beautiful as beautiful.

Just as on the surface of a clean mirror
A reflection of a form that is devoid
Of intrinsic reality comes to appear,
Likewise recognize all trees of phenomena.⁵²²

So in these citations [it demonstrates] how form and so on, while being intrinsically unborn, they become objects of apprehension of worldly [perceptions] and how the son of a barren woman cannot be so. So this [dispute] remains inconclusive for you alone; for us there is no dispute because we do not accept intrinsic arising to form and so on on the conventional level [first and then] negate it on the ultimate level.

2’ Presenting that point by means of a summary

This is as follows.

**The son of a barren woman has no arising in terms of
Suchness by virtue of its own essence or even on the worldly level;
Likewise all of these things do not arise in terms of**

⁵²² Samadhiraja? These stanzas are cited by Candrakīrti in his autocommentary (pp.*).

Worldly suchness by virtue of their own essence.

**Therefore all these phenomena that the Buddha has taught
To be primordially tranquil, free of birth,
And naturally transcending sorrow,
These do not have arising at all times.**

[Question:] “Why is it that in your system it is not the case that arising of form and so on are [first] perceived on the conventional level and then negated on the ultimate level?”

[Response:] Just as arising by virtue of its own reality does not exist for the son of a barren woman in terms of suchness as well as on the level of worldly conventions, similarly, all of these entities like form are unborn by virtue of their essence both on the level of worldly conventions as well as suchness. So as stated here [by Candrakīrti], it is never the case that the Madhyamika defines what exists from the perspective of erroneous apprehension of things as arising by virtue of their own essence as conventional truths. One should also remember the explicit qualifications of the object of negation with [such expressions as] “arising by virtue of an essence.”

In that this is so the Blessed One has stated that all phenomena are primordially tranquil, free of intrinsic arising, [346] and naturally transcend sorrow. Therefore intrinsic arising does not exist at all times. The way in which this is taught is this. For example, *Clouds of Jewel* states:

When the wheel of dharma was turned,
That phenomena are primordially tranquil,
Unborn and naturally transcendent of sorrow,
These truths, you, protector revealed.⁵²³

In that the suchness of phenomena is the object of tranquil gnosis it is tranquil. The reason for this is because it is intrinsically unborn; and the reason for this, in turn, is this. For if something exists by virtue of an essence this would then come to arise; however, since such intrinsic nature does not exist what can arise? Therefore, they are transcendent of sorrow for they are utterly pure. “Primordially” indicates that it is not the case these phenomena are unborn only in the context of [being within] the yogi’s gnosis. What is it then? Even prior to this [stage of yogi’s gnosis], even at the time of worldly conventions, these phenomena were unborn by virtue of their own reality. “Primordial” is a term that is synonymous with “first.” The Buddhist schools do not engage in such disputes as “If something does not exist on the ultimate level, it would not exist even on the conventional level.” Why is this so?

**These [phenomena] such as vase do not exist in suchness,
They exist as well-known to the world;
Similarly as all things come to be the same,**

⁵²³ *Ratnamega*, Kangyur, * Candrakīrti cites this sutra in his autocommentary but does not identify the source.

No consequence ensues that they're same as a barren woman's son.

This is because what they accept [as ultimately real] such as vase and so on, these do not exist in terms of suchness, that is on the ultimate level; yet they exist in terms of established worldly renown, that is on the conventional level. In the same way, given that this is true for all things, if something does not exist on the ultimate level the consequence does not follow that it is equal to the son of a barren woman. This is as explained in the following in *Treasury of Higher Knowledge*:

That which when destroyed or mentally dissected
Fails to apply its thought,
Like “vase water” it exists conventionally;
Ultimate existence is its opposite.⁵²⁴ [347]

So that which does not [continue to] apply its thought because of destruction into its parts is a conventionally existent; take vase for example. When it is broken into pieces (*gyo mor*) its thought no longer apply. Those other facts which when mentally dissected no longer apply their thoughts, these too are conventionally existent; take water for example. Here, when the mind reduces it in terms of other phenomena, such as material form and so on, the thought of water no longer applies. That which even destroyed its thought [continues to] apply and those even when mentally reduced in terms of other phenomena retain its thought, these are ultimately existent. Take matter, for example. Here, even when it is broken into subtle atoms and even when mentally its other components such as taste [atom] are removed, the thought that it is in the nature of matter still applies. View this similarly with respect to feeling [aggregate] and so on.⁵²⁵

So it is explained in the commentary to the *Treasury [of Higher Knowledge]*.

These schools state that it is illogical to assert that if something does not exist on the ultimate level it does not exist on the conventional level. This [citation from *Treasury*] is not to suggest that the presentation of the two truths by these [schools] and the presentation made by Candrakīrti himself are in concordance. What they define as conventionally existent invariably involve grasping at ultimate existence as explained by the Middle Way school.

[Qualm:] “Now if the four elements, which are the designative support of ‘vase’ and so on, are substantially real it would be then logical for “vase” and so on will have conditions or basis of designation. However, according to you Middle Way school, all phenomena are mere designations so there is no designative support that is substantially existent. So the consequence that [phenomena] are similar to the son of a barren woman cannot be avoided.”

⁵²⁴ AK, * Tengyur, mgnon pa, *

⁵²⁵ AKBh, p.* Tengyur, mgnon pa, *

[Response:] This too is incorrect. This is because one cannot establish that the designative basis is substantially real. For example, just as in dependence upon the coming together of nominally real facts like face and so on, [348] a mere designation, the mirror image is perceived, likewise, in dependence upon nominally real pillars and so on something is designated as a house. Similarly, in dependence upon trees forest is designated. Just as in a dream one perceives the arising of sprouts, which shares the nature of being unborn, from a seed that shares the nature of being unborn, similarly, it is perfectly logical for nominally real entities for their designative bases too to be nominally real.

(iii) How dependently originated arising itself prevents the distorted understanding of adhering to extreme views

[Qualm:] If you [Middle Way school] negate arising from self, another, both and from no cause from the standpoints of both the truths, in what manner can one ascertain that from ignorance and so on volitions, consciousness and so on arise and from seed and so on sprout and so on arise on the conventional level?

[Response:] To this I shall say:

**Because things do no arise
From no cause or from such causes
As Èÿvara, from self, another, or from both,
They arise thoroughly through dependence.**

As explained in the manner above, it is not the case that the arising of things come about naturally from no cause, or from Èÿvara as the cause, “and so on” indicates that they do not arise from time, atoms, primal substance, being, or Nṛṛya°a.⁵²⁶ Therefore, since they do not arise from self, another, both or from no cause, it is in dependence upon “this and that” cause and condition “this” effect arises perfectly. This relates to the fact that rejection of arising from the four extremes alone does not preclude the worldly conventions of cause and effect. For example, the Blessed One states:

Here, the terms of phenomena are this. It is thus. If this exists that ensues; this being arisen, that arises. For example, due to the condition of ignorance volitions [come about] ...⁵²⁷

The Precious Garland states:

As analogy for coming of this due to existence of that,
This is like if there is long, there is short; [349]
As analogy for this arising due to that being arisen,
This is like the emergence of light due to a lamp.⁵²⁸

⁵²⁶ Check Tarkajvala on views of origination.*

⁵²⁷ *Rice Seedling Sutra*, * Kangyur, *

⁵²⁸ RV, * Tengyur, *

And also the *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* states:

The agent depends upon the object of act;
The object too originates only in dependence
Upon the agent and other than this
No cause of existence is to be seen.

Likewise [the act of] appropriation as well;
For they are elucidated as object and agent;
Through [this analysis of] object and agent,
Understand all remaining entities as well.⁵²⁹

Thus, [in *Fundamental Wisdom*] only this much is stated; no arising from [any of] the four extremes is mentioned.

So just as the Conqueror taught arising through mere conditions of “this” and “that,” Noble [Nṅgṛjuna] too does the same. In particular, since he accepts dependent origination in terms of contingency, such as the agent being dependent upon the object of the act, with the expression “other than this” he distinguishes arising according to his own standpoint and that of others. This, he explains should be extended all entities that possibly exist. This master upholds how arising must be posited in general and through numerous efforts establishes the point “because [things] do not arise from the four extremes they arise through dependence.” So one should recognize that those who claim what is contrary to this system, that is, “If things do not arise from the four extremes there is no arising at all,” are doing a good work of contaminating through a dense stench of inferior conceptions the unexcelled tradition wherein meaning of profound dependent origination, the unexcelled reason for realizing emptiness, dawns in terms of the meaning of emptiness.

Thus, when the dependent origination of mere conditions is propounded, not only is arising from the four, such as no cause, is become impossible, it also reveals the impossibility of the objects postulated by such views as the following – the eternalistic view reifying intrinsic existence, the nihilistic view [upholding] the functions as being untenable, the eternalism in terms of that every thing that exists in the prior time existing even in the subsequent temporal stages as well, impermanence in terms of the momentariness of intrinsically real preceding and subsequent moments, and [350] conceiving both entities and nonentities as existing by virtue of their essence. To present this, it reads:

**Because things originate utterly through dependence,
These concepts [like self-arising] cannot be examined;
Therefore through this reasoning of dependent origination
The entire network of false views are cut.**

⁵²⁹ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

If, on the basis of this much reasoning, namely, “in dependence upon this cause this effect arises perfectly” the entities that are conventional truths obtain their reality and not otherwise, conceptions such as arising from self, another, and so on cannot be entertained. Therefore this reasoning of dependent origination of mere conditions cuts away all the networks of inferior views, those that view in terms of arising from self, another and so on as mentioned earlier. Thus the Madhyamika who posits mere conditions as the meaning of dependent origination does not accept intrinsic existence with respect to any entity. The *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning* states:

That which arose in dependence on this and that,
That has not arisen as its self-nature;
And that which has not arisen as its own nature,
How can it be called “arisen”?⁵³⁰

Thus it states that which has arisen through dependence is unborn by virtue of its own essence, and if this is so, how can one say that sprout and so on has arisen by virtue of their own essence? *Fundamental Wisdom* also states:

That which is dependently originated,
That I have stated to be emptiness;
This too is designated as causally created;
And this is the path of the middle way.⁵³¹

Thus by virtue of being dependent origination [phenomena] are described to be empty of intrinsic existence. In the sutra too it reads:

That which has arisen through conditions is unborn;
It is devoid of intrinsic nature of arising;
That which depends on conditions is stated to be empty;
He who understands emptiness is heedful.⁵³²

“Being arisen from conditions” is the reasoning proof, the meaning of the thesis “unborn” [351] is presented by the two [subsequent] lines; thus meaning is the “not being born by virtue of an intrinsic nature.” It is not without qualifying the object of negation. For example, [the passage from] *Descent into La’ka* cited in the *Clear Words* it reads:

Great intelligent one, it is with the intention of not being arisen by virtue of intrinsic nature I have revealed all phenomena to be unborn.⁵³³

⁵³⁰ *Sixty Verses*, 19. Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵³¹ MMK, * Both the above stanza from the *Sixty Verses of Reasoning* and this stanza from Nāgārjuna’s *Fundamental Wisdom* are cited by Candrakīrti in his autocommentary (pp. *) The third line of the citation from *Fundamental Wisdom* here differs slightly from the canonical version in Dergé. There it reads “This too is dependently designated” (*de ni brten nas brtags pa ste*).

⁵³² * Kangyur, *

⁵³³ *La’kavatra*, Kangyur, mdo sde, *

Thus the Buddha himself explains his own intention. Therefore because the Buddha taught the negation of intrinsic arising through this reasoning of dependent origination, the king among reasonings, Nāgārjuna's heart was captured and Noble [Nāgārjuna] praised the Blessed One in his numerous texts, such as *Fundamental Wisdom* and *Sixty Verses of Reasoning*, through the avenue of having taught dependent origination alone. So no intelligent person should in anyway utter such foolish statements as "Because of their being arisen through dependence [things] are unborn."

Given that intrinsic existence of entities is not accepted, in that case, how can something that has no intrinsic existence come about through arising from self, another and so on? If, however, there are some that exist by virtue of their intrinsic nature, in that case, their arising will be either from nature [with no cause], from self, another, Ēvara and so on. It is then possible to conceive [things] in terms of eternalism in that what has already arisen do not disintegrate and remain and in terms of annihilation in that they disintegrate. This is not possible in the case of its contrary. To indicate these, it reads:

**Conceptualizations come to be when there is entity;
That no such entity exists has already been thoroughly analyzed.
As an analogy for how without entity these do not come to be,
This is like there being no fire without there being fuel.**

The conceptualizations grasping at extremes will come about if there is the grasping at intrinsic existence of things. [In contrast] on the basis of the reasoning described [earlier] one who has thoroughly analyzed the absence of intrinsic existence of things and has no grasping at intrinsic existence of things, to him none of these conceptualizations of extremes occur. [352] This is, for example, like the absence of fire, the effect, when there is no fuel, which is the cause. Thus through gaining familiarity with the meaning of suchness that has been set forth for the yogis who have actualized the path of the Noble Ones, who see suchness in the manner of not seeing the dualistic conceptual elaborations, for them the conceptualizations manifestly clinging to true existence of any phenomenon as habituated to since beginningless time, these will come to cease. For example, through application of eye ointment the reversal of the perception of falling hair and so on can become an effect for those affected with cataracts. It is not the case that somehow falling hair and so on morph into something that possesses a different nature and then becomes no longer an object for those [affected with cataracts].

(iv) Identifying the fruits of having engaged in analysis through reasoning

This is as follows.

**Ordinary beings are chained by conceptualizations;
The yogi who remains nonconceptual becomes free;
So the conceptualizations that are distorted,
These the wise state to be the effects of excessive analysis.**

**The analyses in the treatises are not made out of attachment
To arguments; they are to present suchness for the sake of freedom;**

Given that the ordinary beings who do not understand this ultimate reality as explained earlier they are principally chained by concepts clinging to extremes, whereas the yogis, the Noble Ones, who have comprehended this reality in the manner [explained] will come to freed. In that the displacement of these conceptualizations grasping at extremes through negating without exception all the objects of apprehension of these conceptions, this has been taught by Noble [Nṛgṛjuna] in his treatise on the Middle Way. So this, the learned ones say, is presented as the fruit of a thorough analysis. The *Hundred Stanzas* also states:

If things possess intrinsic nature,
What benefits is there for seeing emptiness?
Seeing through conceptualization is a bondage;
So this is to be negated here.⁵³⁴

Thus [Śrīyadeva] states that if phenomena exist by virtue of intrinsic nature this would then be their true character so it would be more beautiful to see this; there will be no benefit to seeing emptiness of intrinsic existence. Therefore, because one is chained by seeing through concepts, that is through grasping at intrinsic existence, its object of clinging [353] is to be negated here in this treatise on the Middle Way.

In its commentary too, it reads “‘Conceptualization’ refers to a superimposition of the sense of intrinsic nature to facts that are not final” so it is explained as reifying what do not exist as final truths as such. Therefore, this should not be taken as referring to all forms of conceptualization; it refers to conceptualization of true existence and conceptualizations grasping at extremes. With respect to “conceptualization grasping at an extreme” although the term “extreme” connotes many things the meaning of “extreme” in the context of “freedom from extreme” as presented in the following in *Illumination of the Middle Way*:

If the middle happens to possess any entity that constitutes the mind’s own reality which is ultimate, in that case, because it possesses such [reality] in whatever manner it is clung to, whether as permanent or as impermanent, this constitutes an extreme. That which follows the suchness of entities as it is and brings this to the mind in a correct manner, this it is illogical to assert that to be a place for falling down.⁵³⁵

This explains that to object that exists just as in accordance with the manner in which it is apprehended is not an extreme here; such a mind too is a correct mental engagement so it is not a grasping at an extreme. Therefore, the extreme here refers to the place for falling down. For example, in the world, a cliff is known as an extreme edge and falling off from it called fall off from an extreme. Here, given that final existence is impossible even on the conventional level so the absence of final existence exists conventionally. Therefore

⁵³⁴ CS, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵³⁵ *Madhyamakālaṅkāra*, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

the statement [things] do not exist on the ultimate level does not constitute grasping at extreme of nihilism and the negation [things] do not exist so is not a rejection of the extreme of nonexistence. Nevertheless, if one grasps at the nonexistence that is the rejection of the object of negation as final existence, one falls into the extreme of nonexistence of entities. So negating this constitutes rejection of the extreme of nonexistence as well. As for the existence of phenomena, such as karma and its effects, [354] on the conventional level, it is impossible for any valid cognition to contravene this. Therefore, their nonexistence and grasping at these to be nonexistent – both such object and subject – are, respectively, the extreme of nonexistence and grasping at its extreme. The statement “the Buddha does not have faults” is neither the extreme of nonexistence nor grasping at the extreme of nonexistence.

This [grasping at karma and its effect to be nonexistent] is the extreme of nonexistence in terms of denigration, while the previous one is the extreme of nonexistence in terms of reification. The object and subject pertaining to grasping at ultimate existence or intrinsic existence are [respectively] the extreme of existence and grasping at this extreme. Statements such as “the Buddhas possess wisdom and compassion” is neither the extreme of existence nor the grasping at such an extreme. In some texts there are also occasions where all forms of ultimate existence are described as extremes of existence.

One should therefore understand that the extremely diverse varieties of reasoning employed by Noble [Nḡṛjuna] in his treatise on the middle way, these are not done so out of attachment to arguments; that is they are not employed to outshine others. The reason why suchness is presented in the treatise on the middle way is to help thoroughly liberate people with the thought “How I wish that sentient beings realize this suchness without distortion and attain liberation.”

[Qualm:] Is it not the case the treatise cites all the challenges and arguments of the proponents of real entities? Therefore, the mode of engagement of the treatise is to enter into disputations so how can the reversal of conceptualizations alone be posited as the fruit?

[Response:] Although this thorough analysis [in the treatise on the middle way] is not engaged in for the sake of disputation, however, when suchness is closely presented, [355] given that the standpoint of the opponents are feeble, [although] one **does not deliberately target** (‘*then mi ‘dzugs*) them, just like [the fate of] darkness when light approaches, that the other’s texts come to be undermined is not due to our fault. To state this, it reads:

**However when in the course of presenting suchness
If other’s texts are undermined there is no fault for this.**

If when explaining suchness thoroughly the postulations made by other’s texts come to be undermined, we shall bear no fault. For example, *Hundred Stanzas* states:

This teaching was not given by Tathḡgata

For the sake of engaging in disputation;
However, like fire to a fuel,
It burns off the opponent's challenges.⁵³⁶

Thus this is explained by means of the analogy of how lighting a fire is done for the sake of boiling [water for a] drink not for the sake of ashes and charcoal yet these [ashes and so on] come about as a by-product.

If teaching were to be given out of attachment to disputation, in that case, without doubt one feels hostile towards other's flawed standpoint and intimately attached to one's own standpoint that is in consonant with reason. So there will be no end to conceptualizations of anger and attachment. Why is this so?

**So just like attachment to one's own views
And such attitudes as hostility towards other's views,
Those who utterly dispel such attachment and anger
And analyze will swiftly achieve freedom.**

Being attached to one's own views and likewise being perturbed within one's mind with regard to the views of others, given that these are conceptualizations that chain, instead of averting thoughts of anger and attachment they will increase and one will be chained in a bondage and not become free. Given that this teaching was not taught for the sake of disputation, thoroughly dispelling attachment to one's own standpoint and anger towards other's standpoint and engaging in fine analysis through reason, through this one will swiftly attain freedom. The *Sixty Verses of Reasoning* also states:

Those who are great beings,
They have neither thesis nor contention;
For those who have no thesis,
How can there be opposing thesis?⁵³⁷

And *Hundred Stanzas* states: [356]

If you've attachment to your own thesis
And dislike for other's thesis,
You'll not travel to nirvaṇa
And dualistic experiences will not be pacified.⁵³⁸

King of Meditations also states:

He who become attached upon hearing this teaching
And becomes angry upon hearing what is not dharma,
Destroyed by pride and complacency they'll become false;

⁵³⁶ CS, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵³⁷ *Sixty Verses*, 50. Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵³⁸ CS, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

Through the power of pride they'll experience suffering.⁵³⁹

This statement that if one does not analyze with an unbiased mind discarding prejudices of attachment and hostility to the standpoints of one's own and others, on the basis of this meditation on the analysis of the philosophical tenets alone one could be chained tighter into the cycle of existence should be recognized as giving an extraordinary advice by a compassionate heart to us.

[Candrakīrti] states that from the refutation of arising-from-self up to here presents the selflessness of phenomena. This is intended [to suggest] that there are numerous contexts where selflessness of phenomena with regard to entities has been presented and that the selflessness of phenomena with regard to nonentities too has been presented now and then in between.

⁵³⁹ *Samadhirājā*, Kangyur, *

The Sixth Ground VI

Establishing No-Self of Persons

(b) Establishing selflessness of person through reasoning

This has three parts:

- (i) How a liberation-seeker must be first negate the intrinsic existence of self itself
- (ii) The method of negating intrinsic existence of self and mine
- (iii) Extending the analysis of self and chariot to other

The first is as follows. Thus having presented selflessness of phenomena through scriptures and reasoning, after this to present selflessness of person, it reads:

**That all faults such as afflictions come from egoistic view
[Grasping at] perishable collection, seeing this with mind
And realizing that self is the object of this,
The yogi will engage in the negation of the self.**

Here, the yogi who wishes to enter suchness and abandon all faults of afflictions will probe “What lies at the root of this wandering in cyclic existence?” When he examines thus the afflictions, such as attachment, and their faults, such as birth, aging, sickness and death, [357] all of these without exception will be seen by [his] mind as coming into being from the afflicted intelligence that views at the perishable collection, [the egoistic view] that possesses the aspects of “I” and “mine” and grasps at intrinsic existence of these two. Because all of these [afflictions and their effects] are the effects of the egoistic view [grasping] at the perishable collection. When he sees this the wish to abandon the egoistic view emerges. And at that point, if he is someone with wisdom, he will come to see that the abandonment of this requires seeing the absence of selfhood, which is object as apprehended by the egoistic view, on the object as per the citations from *Hymns to the Ultimate Expanse* and *Four Hundred Stanzas*. When he examines what is the objective focus being clung to by the egoistic view, he will realize that the self, which is the “I” in the context of the thought “I am,” is the objective focus of this view of self. For the grasping at “I” is a subject that takes self as its object. In that case, given that what he wishes to to abandon all the defects and the faults, it is the egoistic view, which is the root, that needs to be relinquished. This in turn is achieved on the basis of comprehending the nonexistence of the selfhood of its objective focus self, namely the existence of self by means of an essence. Therefore the yogi will first examine whether this object of apprehension of self known as the “self” exists inherently or not. If it is on the basis of the yogi negating that self as intrinsic existence and relinquishing the egoistic view all defects and faults cease [for him], the thorough analysis of the self is a means for achieving liberation. *The Compendium of Trainings* states:

Thus the emptiness of person is utterly established. Therefore since the root has been cut off all the afflictions will not emerge. This is as stated in the following in *The Secrets of the Thatḡgata Sutra*:

/ḡntamati, it it thus. Just as when a tree is cut at the root, all its branches [358] and their leaves as well as all the small twigs will come to dry. So, /ḡntamati, similarly, when the egoistic view is extinguished all the afflictions and derivative afflictions will come to be extinguished.⁵⁴⁰

On this statement the intention of all the learned masters are in convergence. Therefore, one should at first contemplate the defects of cyclic existence on the basis of an excellent understanding [of these]; next, one must identify what is the root of this [cycle of existence]; then, when one wishes to relinquish it one must, without erring in the method of relinquishing [this root of cyclic existence], find the view of selflessness that is the negation of the apprehended object of this [self view] and cultivate familiarity with its meaning. One should recognize that this [sequence of practices] is essential irrespective whether it is the great or the lesser vehicle.

[Qualm:] In *The Precious Garland* it states:

So long there is grasping at the aggregates,
So long there remains grasping at “I;”
If there is “I” grasping from this there are acts;
And from acts birth comes to be.⁵⁴¹

Thus the grasping at true existence of aggregates, a grasping at selfhood of phenomena, is described as the root of cyclic existence. Yet here the egoistic view is described as the root of cyclic existence. These two statements are contradictory for it is untenable for there to be two incompatible roots of cyclic existence.

[Response:] There is no fault [here]. For according to this [Middle Way] system the two self-grasping are differentiated on the basis of their distinct objective focuses; there are no two different aspects with distinct objects of apprehension. Both these [graspings] possess the aspect of apprehending existence by virtue of self-defining characteristics. That it is contradictory for there to be two roots of cyclic existence is understood in the context of those who posit two [states of mind] that possess different mode of apprehension in their engagement with objects as being the roots of cyclic existence. Therefore, when grasping at selfhood of phenomena is presented as the root of the egoistic view, two subclasses of ignorance are being described as cause and effect; and when both of these are presented as the roots of afflictions, they are revealed to be the roots of all other afflictions that share modes of apprehension that differ from [these two roots]. [359] Given that this feature is found in both of these two [kinds of ignorance] there is no contradiction; just there is no contradiction for both the preceding and subsequent instances of ignorance being the root of cyclic existence.

⁵⁴⁰ SS, chapter XIV (right at the beginning).

⁵⁴¹ RV, * Tennyur, *

(ii) The method of negating intrinsic existence of self and mine

This has two parts:

- 1' Negating intrinsic existence of self
- 2' Negating intrinsic existence of "mine"

The first has six parts:

- a' Negating self that is different entity from the aggregates as postulated by other [non-Buddhist] schools
- b' Negating aggregates as self as postulated by fellow Buddhist schools
- c' Negating the remaining three positions, such as the support and the supported
- d' Negating substantial existing person that is neither identical nor different [from the aggregates]
- e' Presenting the self to be a mere dependent designation together with analogy
- f' Demonstrating the benefits of how by positing thus it is easy to abandon conceptualization grasping at extremes

The first has two parts:

- i' Presenting the opponent's standpoint
- ii' Refuting that standpoint

The first is as follows. Here, if someone who does not cognize suchness were to ask "What is this self that is the objective focus of the egoistic view? Show it to me?" this has two parts:

- 1'' Presenting the Sa'khya standpoint
- 2'' Presenting the standpoints of VaiĪika and others

The first is as follows:

**That the self as the consumer, a permanent entity, not an agent,
Absent of qualities and action is asserted by the *tirthikas*;**

Here, the non-Buddhist Sa'khya postulates [the self] as the "consumer" in that it is the experiencer of happiness, suffering and so on; it is a permanent entity, not the agent [responsible] for the manifest; it is devoid of qualities, such as goodness, energy and inertia; because it pervades [everywhere] it is devoid of activity. The Sa'khyas state the following:

The primal substance is not the manifest;
The seven, such as the great, are both the substance and the manifest;
The sixteen [categories] as the manifest [alone];

The person is neither substance nor the manifest.⁵⁴²

In that it thoroughly creates the effects it is referred to as the “substance.” [360] When does it create this? It does this when it perceives the wish of the person. [For example] when the desire arises as to enjoy sense objects, such as sound, the substance that recognizes the person’s wish connects with the person and the primal substance brings forth sound and so on. The manner in which this happens is this. From substance the great [elements] arises; from these the I-maker arises and from this the collection of sixteen [categories] – the eleven faculties and the the five sense objects (*de tsam nga*) arise. From these sixteen the five elements [arise] for it is stated “From sound and so on five the five elements emerge.” This then is the process. “Is not the manifest” indicates that [the primal substance] is the agent of the creation of the effects alone; it is not the manifest like the great and so on. The seven, such as the great, are both agents as well as the manifest. The seven, such as the great, are from the perspective of their manifestations a substance while, from the perspective of the primal substance, they are manifestations. The sixteen, such as the faculty of mind, are manifestations alone. The person is neither the agent of creation nor a manifestatin. The five senses, such as the ears, because of being influenced by the thought, they cling to their objects of apprehension such as the sound. Then the referent of this clinging of the mind is reflected upon by the person. Therefore someone who desires to experience the objects comes to experience them. However, when, as a result of lessening of attachment to the objects, one comes to view the objects defect-ridden they become free of attachment. At that point they gradually cultivate the meditative concentrations and, on this basis, when they attain superior knowledge of divine vision, with such eyes he will look at the primal substance. When he looks at it the primal substance [361] will become abashed like someone else’s woman and, because of this, he will not operate in the self which will then become free. Also, as all the collections of the manifest will revert from their process of arising, they will totally dissolve into the primal substance. At this point when they become the nature of unmanifest the person alone will remain. This is therefore called release.

Because this self abides always in an isolated nature it is referred to as “permanent.” What then are creator and what are not? Here, the three – goodness, inertia and energy – are the three qualities. Goodness has the nature of mobility and engagement; inertia has the nature of heaviness and veiling; and energy has the nature of lightness and extreme clarity. Pleasure, pain and neutrality are synonyms of these [qualities] alone. The state of their equilibrium is known as the primal substance for in this the qualities are predominant and one is utterly pacified. The state when manifestations have not taken place is the substance and from the substance the great [that is mind] arises. The “great” and “mind” are synonyms and it is wherein both the external objects as well as the internal reflections appear. From the great I-maker arises, which is three kinds – that of the manifest, that of energy and that of inertia. From the I-maker of the manifest the five “that alone” emerge; the five “that alone” refer to the five sense objects, which are the form, sound, smell, taste and tactility. From these sense objects emerge the elements – which are the ones known as earth, water, fire, wind and space. From the I-maker of

⁵⁴² Cited in *

energy emerge the five action faculties, which are voice, hands, legs, anus, sex organ, and the five mental faculties, which are the faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin [362] of body as well the mental faculty which shares the nature of being both. Thus there are twelve [organs]. The I-maker of inertia serves as the basis for the operation of the other two I-makers. Of these, the seven – the great, I-maker, and the five sense objects – are both substance and manifestations; the ten faculties, the mental faculty and the five elements are manifestations alone; while the primal substance is substance alone. This is their philosophical position.

2” Presenting the standpoints of VaiĀe”ika and others

This is as follows:

On the basis of slight and minor differentiations The *tirthikas* evolved into diverse philosophical systems.

Just as Sa’khyā accepts the self on the basis of slight differentiations of that self the systems of the non-Buddhist *tirthikas* evolve into schools. For example, the VaiĀe”ikas speak of (1) mind, (2) pleasure, (3) pain, (4) desire, (5) aversion, (6) effort, (7) morality and (8) immorality and (9) cohering force, thus nine qualities of the self. Of these, the mind apprehends objects; pleasure refers to experiencing the objects that are desirable, while pain is the opposite; desire refers to yearning for the objects of your desire; aversion is the turning away from objects that are undesirable; effort refers to the mind’s skilfulness in getting to the bottom of the aim that is being sought; that which give rise to higher rebirth and definite goodness [of liberation] are morality, while those that are opposite are immorality; that which arises from cognition as well as serves as the cause of cognition is the cohering force. So long as these nine qualities of the self converge on the self and remain present so long one will revolve in the cycle of existence because one [continues to] pursue the virtuous and nonvirtuous actions produced by these [qualities]. However, when through the awareness perfectly realizing [the nature of] the person severs qualities such as mind from their roots, one will abide in one’s own nature and will thus attain freedom. [363] Such a self is permanent, it is the creator of effects, consumer that experiences the effects and is endowed with the qualities; and because it is pervasive it said to be devoid of activity. Some VaiĀe”ika do accept it as possessing the activity of stretching and bending [of the limbs].

The proponents of the Vedas assert that just as the space in all the separate vases are one, in the same manner, dependence upon the diversity of its support, namely the body, it is one self alone that [appears as] diverse. Because the commentary states “it is on the basis of slight differentiation in the characteristics of the self the systems of the non-Buddhists evolve into different schools,”⁵⁴³ those who explain that it is on the basis of further divisions of Sa’khyā that the systems of the non-Buddhist schools evolved into different schools, they have failed to understand the point [being made here].

ii’ Refuting that standpoint

⁵⁴³ MABh, * Tengyu, dbu ma, *

This is as follows:

**Because, like the son of a barren woman, it's devoid of arising,
No such self [as postulated] exists at all;
This is not suitable to be the basis of grasping at 'I' as well;
It's not accepted to be existent even conventionally.**

**Given that its characteristics that are described
In the different treatises of the *tirthikas* are undermined
By non-arising as the reasoning proof which is known
To themselves all such characteristics do not exist.**

**Therefore no self exists that is different from the aggregates;
For apart from the aggregates no apprehension of it exists;
It's unacceptable also as the basis of 'I' apprehension in the world;
Even those who are not aware of this view selfhood.**

**Those who spent many eons in the animal realm,
These too do not see this unborn permanent entity;
Yet one sees that 'I' apprehension operates in these as well.
Therefore there is no self at all that is different from the aggregates.**

These diverse concepts of self spoken of in the texts of each of these non-Buddhists, they do not exist as postulated by them, that is in terms of suchness, for they are devoid of arising, namely they are unborn. This reasoning proof is something that is inferred or accepted by the non-Buddhists themselves. They are like the son of a barren woman, for example.

Although this reasoning proof negates the verbalized subject that this is not a fault because of the significance of both the reasoning sign and the probandum being mere elimination. This self postulated by others is also not suitable as the basis of the innate I-grasping; the reasoning sign and example are same as before. "The basis of innate I-grasping" suggests that, of the two – the objective focus and the [apprehended] aspect – it is not the objective focus. Its object is the mere I, the person and so on; since these are accepted as being functional entities they are inconsistent in being unborn. Since the object of the [apprehended] aspect is the selfhood of person, which does not exist even on the conventional level, [364] so it is not inconsistent for it to be unborn. Therefore, those who assert that the selfhood of person exists in this system [of Candrakirti] are saying this out of their whim without [understanding] the key points of the tenets of this school and refined differentiation of the objects of the objective focus and the aspect [of apprehension] of the egoistic view. Thus the negation of the existence of self and its being the object of apprehension of I-grasping are [undertaken] within the context of qualifying the object of negation.

Not only this, one should also understand that these two [selfhood and the apprehended object of self-grasping] are rejected even on the conventional level. In that this is so [the statement] “self does not exist” should be understood in terms of nonexistence of self in terms of substantial reality. So not only do these two elements – the reasoning proof and the example – negate the two objects of negation, one should also understand [they indicate] that all the variations of the self postulated by the non-Buddhists do not exist as well. This is because the reasoning that they are unborn, which is known to the non-Buddhists themselves, undermine all those characteristics of self presented by the non-Buddhists in the treatise of Sa’khya as well the treatises of VaiĀe’ika. This is done on the basis of stating that all the characteristics of the self described by Sa’khya and VaiĀe’ika as described above, none of these exist at all. On the basis of this approach one should recognize that with respect to all propositions of selfhood it is through being unborn as the reasoning sign and the son of a barren woman as the example that the nature and characteristics postulated by these [proponents of self] are dispelled.⁵⁴⁴

Therefore there is no self that is different entity from the aggregates for, except for apprehending the aggregates, there exists no instance of grasping at self on its own. This suggests the following point: If self is different entity from the aggregates it will then lack any relationship [with the aggregates] since none of the two modes of relation is present [here]. In that case, just as one can apprehend a fabric of cloth on its own without apprehending a vase, it should be [graspable] yet [365] this is never seen. *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* states:

It’s untenable for the self to be
Different from the appropriated;
For if it’s different, without the appropriated,
It should be graspable; this is not so.⁵⁴⁵

And:

If it’s different from the aggregates,
It will lack the characteristics of the aggregates;⁵⁴⁶

“The appropriated” refers to the aggregates.

A further objection is that this self that is different entity from the aggregates is not accepted [by us] to be the basis or the objective focus of the I-grasping mind of the sentient beings since beginningless time. Because without being aware, that is not apprehending the aspect, of the self as postulated by the non-Buddhists one can, on the

⁵⁴⁴ ngo bo dang khyad par frnams bsal bar rig par bya’o// The Tibetan text of the critical Tibetan edition as well as the established redactions of Tsongkhapa’s collected works spells the final verb of this sentence as “illuminated” (gsal bar bya’o). This last sentence of the paragraph is found in Candrakīrti’s commentary, where the verb is spelt bsal bar giving a clearer sense to the sentence.

⁵⁴⁵ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid., chapter, *

basis of clinging, come to view self in terms of “I” and “mine.” This is not a repetition of the earlier negation “that it is not the basis of I-grasping.” Earlier it is the substantially real self that was negated as the objective focus of the self view; here, however, it is [a self that is] different entity from the aggregates that is being negated as the objective focus.

The thought might occur that even in the case of those persons who do not know to qualify the self in terms of permanence, impermanence, unborn and so on, the I-grasping view that takes such self as its object do exist due to their past habituation. This, however, is not the case. Because it is only in those whose mind has been altered by inferior philosophical tenets the grasping at a self that is of different entity from the aggregates as the basis of the I-grasping is present. [Nevertheless] even in those sentient beings who have familiarity with inferior philosophical tenets one sees I-grasping operating. For example, some sentient beings even though they have spent so many eons in the animal realm in the past, still they do not turn away from birth in the animal states. [366] This too [makes] one recognize that even in those who do not perceive the self that is permanent and unborn as postulated by the non-Buddhists, that I-grasping operates in them can be seen. Therefore, having understood this what wise person would cling to this such self as postulated by the non-Buddhists as the basis of I-grasping? Therefore, the self that is different entity from the aggregates does not exist anywhere. The term “too” embraces those who have been born in the hell realms and so on.

b’ Negating aggregates as self as postulated by fellow Buddhist schools

This has five parts:

- i’ Presenting objections to the view that the aggregates *are* the self
- ii’ Presenting the proofs that such a view is incorrect
- iii’ Explaining the intention of stating the aggregates to be the self
- iv’ Presenting other objections to proposing the aggregates to be the self
- v’ Showing how the opponent’s standpoint is **irrelevant** (‘*brel med*)

The first has two parts:

- 1” The actual point
- 2” Repudiating the responses aimed at overcoming the objections

The first has two parts:

- a” Presenting the opponent’s standpoint
- b” Refuting that standpoint

The first is as follows:

**Since there is no existing self apart from the aggregates,
The focus of self-view is the aggregates alone;**

**Some assert as the basis of this self-view
All five aggregates while others the mind alone.**

Here, the fellow Buddhists say thus: Given that self that is different entity from the aggregates does not exist, of the two – the objective focus and the [apprehended] aspect – of the egoistic view, the objective focus is the aggregates alone. Because only two possibilities are determined, either positing something that is different entity from the aggregates as the objective focus or an inner aggregates to be objective focus, and the first [possibility] is unsuitable. Therefore, they claim, the self is [nothing but] one's own mere aggregates. This is the position of the Vatsīputrīyā and so on which belong to the Sa'amitiyā school. Among them, some Sa'amitiyā followers assert all five aggregates of oneself to be the objective focus of the self view and say that clinging to self too arises from the five aggregates as well. This is as stated by the Blessed One in the following:

O monks, whether it is the renunciants [367] or the brahmins, whoever views with the thought of “self” views so only with respect to these five appropriated aggregates.⁵⁴⁷

Therefore, to help clarify that your [the non-Buddhist's] view relates to the collection of facts that are by their nature perishable and not to a self or “mine” [the Buddha] described the views that are ingrained [within us] with aspects of self and “mine” as [the egoistic thought] viewing the perishable collection. So they claim.

Thus because of the statement “it views the appropriated five aggregates” they accept all five aggregates to be the objective focus of the self view.

Some followers of Sa'amitiyā assert the mind alone to be the self. [They cite the following] where [the Buddha] uses the term “self” for the mind:

One is one's own savior;
What other would be the savior?
He who has well tamed oneself,
Such wise person attain higher birth.⁵⁴⁸

On what basis do we know this? Because there is no self apart from the aggregates and also in another sutra the disciplining of mind is stated:

The disciplined mind is excellent;
The disciplined mind leads to happiness.

So it is on from this we understand [they assert]. Therefore, it is the mind that is the basis of I-grasping that is called “self.” The *Blaze of Reasoning* too states:

⁵⁴⁷ Cited in MABh; see if this cited in AKBh, 9.*

⁵⁴⁸ *Collection of Aphorisms?* * See if AKBh, 9 cites this as well.

Thus, we too shall, on the conventional level, actually apply the term “self” to consciousness. In that it is consciousness that appropriates the rebirth it is the self. .. Thus it [self] is designated to the body and the collection of faculties.⁵⁴⁹

In general, in some sutras it is stated that the disciplined mind [leads to] attainment of happiness, while in others it states that by disciplining the self one attains higher birth. [368] These then are the scriptural citations that posit the mind as self and assert the following to be the reasoning proof: “That which appropriates the aggregates is the self and since it is consciousness that appropriates rebirth the consciousness is posited to be the self.”

Given that this master does not accept foundational consciousness the consciousness that appropriates bodily existence is the mental consciousness. This is true also for others who do not accept foundational consciousness. Those who accept foundational consciousness assert the foundational consciousness itself to be the defined identity of the person. Here, although these systems do accept that Disciples and Self-Enlightened Ones realize the person to be devoid of substantial reality, they do not accept that they realize the two consciousnesses to be devoid of substantial reality. Therefore, the proposition that person does not exist as substantially real is accepted from the point of view of the identity of person itself; it’s not accepted to be so with respect to consciousness that is the defined identity of the person.

b” Refuting that standpoint

This is as follows:

**If the aggregates are the self in that case
As it is many the self too will be many;
The self is become substantially real and viewing thus
Will not be distorted for it relates to substantial reality.**

**At the time of nirva°a the self will definitely cease;
And to the moments prior to nirva°a, since there is
No agent that produces the moments their effects cannot be;
What is gathered by one will be consumed by another.**

According to the standpoint that one’s own five aggregates are the self, if this is so, because the aggregates are many even with respect to a single person his self will become many. On the view that consciousness is the self, according to this, either due to the divisions of consciousness such as into eye consciousness and so on, or due to divisions of consciousness in terms of the arising and ceasing of many instances of consciousness within each and every moment [of time], given that consciousness is many self too would become many. Here, the commentary states that consequence of many selves is to be leveled against the first of the two standpoints; alternatively, another fault could be

⁵⁴⁹ Tarkajvāla, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

leveled against both [standpoints].⁵⁵⁰ Since this [consequence] cannot be leveled against mere acceptance of many and **identity of entity**, it is leveled against the view that self and aggregates are identical with no existence of difference at all (*tha dad gtan med gcig*). However, since the opponent has not accepted [such a view] right from the beginning it is on the basis of pushing that although there is no fault in being identical in terms of entity but being merely distinct [within the framework of] what is unreal, for the one who accepts self and aggregates to be true existence, if [two things] are identical in terms of entity, [369] they then become would become indivisibly one and after this the consequence that [either] self is many or the five aggregates will become one are leveled. In that case, on the basis of the scriptural citation “When a being is born the person alone is born,” [one can demonstrate] that the opponent does not accept either the self to be many.

[Furthermore] self will become substantially real for it is only the divisions of convergence of substances such as form that have evolved into distinct [entities] that are referred to as the “aggregates.” And because they are being termed as “self” the self will become substantially real. Yet on the basis of the following [scriptural citations one can demonstrate] that the opponent does not accept the self to be substantially real either:

O monks, these five are mere name, mere conventions and mere designations. It is thus, for instance, like “past time,” “future time,” “space,” “nirvaṇa,” and “person.”⁵⁵¹

Similarly:

Just as on the basis of collection of parts
One speaks of a “chariot,”
Likewise in dependence upon aggregates
One speaks conventionally of “sentient beings.”⁵⁵²

Furthermore, since this egoistic view focused on the aggregates would be engaging with substantial realities, that is it would be a subject with substantially real object, so like perceptions of blue and yellow colors it will be nondistorted. Therefore when the egoistic view is relinquished either it would not be done so in the manner of nonoccurrence of its identical instances in an uninterrupted process; or like the perceptions that focus on blue and yellow colors, it will be relinquished only in terms of relinquishing the attachment of attraction towards the egoistic view. Furthermore, if one’s own aggregates are the self, according to you [Buddhist essentialists], at the time of transcending sorrow without residue, since all five aggregates come to cease, definitely the self too would come to cease. This will therefore be a nihilistic view grasping at an extreme. This is because you maintain the viewing of what is held as the self in terms of permanence or impermanence [370] as views grasping at extremes. Prior to this transcendence from sorrow, during each moments of time, since the aggregates undergo arising and disintegration every moment

⁵⁵⁰ MABh, p.* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁵¹ * MABh, see if this is cited in AK, 9.*

⁵⁵² MABh, *

the self too would inherently undergo during each and every moment of time its own arising and disintegration. In that case, just as when one recalls a past life one does not hold the thought “This body of mine emerged before,” so [the Blessed One] would utter such statements as “On that occasion and at that time I was the king known as Mṅgadhṭṭa.”⁵⁵³ Because the self of that time has ceased just like the body so it does not exist at present; [furthermore] you have accepted that in this life a distinct self that is intrinsically separate from the past self is born. *Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way* states:

The appropriated are not self;
They come into being and disintegrate;
Just like what are appropriated,
The appropriated too be so.⁵⁵⁴

And:

If the aggregates are the self,
It'll then have arising and disintegration;⁵⁵⁵

If the preceding and subsequent instances [of the self] are inherently separate, in that case, since there is no creator self, karma would not exist as well for it would lack a support for its persistence. Therefore, karma would have no relation to its effects. If it's argued that because the effects of karma created in the preceding moments are experienced in the subsequent [temporal] moments, this fault does not apply, in that case, given that the fruitional effects of karma accumulated by another is being enjoyed by someone else, someone else would consume the fruits gathered by a person with a different continuum. This being the case, [there are the consequences] that a karmic deed already done will come to be wasted and that one will encounter [the effects of karmic deed] not done [by oneself]. In *Fundamental Wisdom* too it reads:

For if they're different,
Then it would occur even without that;
Likewise it will continue to persist [371]
And it will be born without that being dead.

There will such consequences as the following:
It will cease, karmic deeds will be wasted,
The karmic deeds done by another,
These will be experienced by others.⁵⁵⁶

Thus if the preceding and the subsequent [instances] are intrinsically separate, since it would be illogical for [the subsequent instances] to be contingent upon the preceding

⁵⁵³ * Check for source. AK cites this as well.

⁵⁵⁴ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., *

⁵⁵⁶ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

[instances], so [self] would come into being even without there being a preceding instance; and since the preceding self would remain as it will be born in this life without dying, and so on.

2” Repudiating the responses aimed at overcoming the objections

This is as follows.

**“No such fault ensue because they share a continuum,” if asserted,
Earlier when analyzing continuum objections were already presented;
So the aggregates and the mind are not suited to be the self;**

The [opponent] may assert, “Although the preceding and subsequent instances are separate, even then as they share the same continuum, there is no problem.” Then because there is a shared single continuum to the members of this continuum, which are on the level of their reality substantially distinct if there is no problem, this too is untenable for objections have already been raised earlier when thoroughly analyzing [the claim of] shared single continuum to things that are intrinsically distinct. This is in the context of the line “The properties of Maitreya and Upagupta.”⁵⁵⁷ *Fundamental Wisdom* too states:

If the god is different from the human,
[The self] becomes an impermanent thing;
And if the god and the human are separate,
Then [a shared] continuum will not be tenable.⁵⁵⁸

Therefore, since shared single continuum is untenable to things that are intrinsically distinct, the [undesired] consequences that one meets with [the effects of] karmic act not done and that karmic deeds done will become wasted cannot be averted. Therefore it is incorrect to assert the aggregates and one’s mind to be the self itself.

ii’ Presenting the proofs that such a view is incorrect

This is as follows.

The world having a final end and so on do not stand.

Not only that on the basis of the reasoning just presented that the aggregates and the mind are not the self, furthermore, given that all the [Buddhist] schools accept the views, such as the world is finite and so on, to be views pertaining to the unanswered questions, it is illogical for the aggregates to be the self. “So on” include the following: that is is not finite, that is both, it is neither; that the world is eternal, it is impermanent, it is both, it is

⁵⁵⁷ Refer to the section on Maitreya and Upagupta in MA. Give verse number as well as page number of Rapsel.*

⁵⁵⁸ MMK, * Tengyur, *

neither; that the Thatḡgata [372] persists after his death, that he does not persist, it is both, it is neither; thus these twelve and [in addition] there are the two views: that which is body *is* the life-force and [the view] that the body is different and the life-force is different. These fourteen as accepted as not pronouncable as such.

If, however, by the term “world” one apprehends the aggregates, in that case, since it is one’s own standpoint that the aggregates undergo arising and disintegration, the world should have been pronounced [by the Buddha] to be impermanent. According to you since the aggregates do not exist following nirva^o a transcendence, that the world is finite and that the Thatḡgata persists after his death should have been pronounced as well. Therefore, since [the Buddha] rejected making pronouncements on [questions] such as the world is finite and so on, [the claim] “The aggregates are the self” remains untenable.

Here, “life-force” is a synonym for “self.” [The question on] the world was being asked from the perspective of [belief in] selfhood. So if the question is being asked with [notion of] a person in the form of an internal agent in mind, since the basis does not exist no pronouncements can be made with respect to its characteristics. However, if pronouncements were to be made on the basis of a self as a mere designation, in that case, given that these questioners do not possess the fortunate facility for realizing selflessness no pronouncement can be made.

iii’ Explaining the intention of stating the aggregates to be the self

This is as follows.

**For you when the yogi sees [the truth of] no-self,
At that point the entities will certainly become nonexistent;
If it’s the permanent self that is relinquished, in that case,
For you the aggregates and the mind cannot be the self.**

**According to you because the yogi who sees no-self
Has not realized the suchness of form and so on,
And because he engages on the basis of objectifying the form,
Attachment and so on will arise for he has failed to realize its nature.**

There are other problems as well. For according to you, when the yogi perceives selflessness directly and sees the truth of suffering in terms of the aspect of no-self as in the statement “All phenomena are no self,” at that point [the yogi] will most certainly see entity of the aggregates to be nonexistent and will thus see the self to be nonexistent. [373] This is because [for you] the aggregates and the mind *are* the self. However, since this is something that you do not accept the aggregates are not the self.

[Qualm:] In that case even according to the system that does not assert the aggregates to be the self, when selfless person is directly perceived, [the person] will have to see all the instantiations of persons that are identified as the defined person to be nonexistent. For the same argument applies here too.

[Response:] Now here, if one fails to understand the subtleties of reasoning this [question] cannot be answered effectively. The positing of the aggregates and the mind as being the self by the opponent is done on the basis of searching for the true referent of the designated term [self] and without realizing the fact that self and person are posited merely through the power of conventions. Because of this the identity of the aggregates and mind as the self acquires the character that they become inherently existing self. And when selflessness is perceived directly, since such self must be realized to be totally nonexistent, the fault stands for the opponent that all those facts, such as the aggregates and mind, that are the self too must be seen as being nonexistent. This fault, however, does not apply at all to the system that posits [the identity of person] on the basis of mere designation and not by means of searching for the true referent of the designated terms.

The following might occur: “When the term self is used in the context of relating karma and its effects, given that self that is different reality from the aggregates remains impossible, [the term] applies only to the aggregates. However, when selflessness is being [directly] perceived, the term applies only to the self as an internal agent as postulated by the non-Buddhists. Therefore, even when selflessness is seen it is **the mere mental formation** (‘*du byed tsam*) that is devoid of an internal agent is seen; and for this, there is no fault of seeing the nonexistence of entities such as the aggregates.”

When seeing no-self if it is the permanent self [374] that is the inner agent which is abandoned, that is seen as nonexistent, in maintaining this, the term self cannot be applied to other referents in other different contexts. Therefore, your aggregates or the mind do not constitute the self in which case your position will be understand. If it is maintained that in the context of relating karma and its effects we do not assert that the non-Buddhist’s term for self applies to such an object so there is no fault of undermining our own position. This too is untenable. There is no logic to acting at will asserting “Here it is the inner agent that is the self and otherwise “In the context of karma and its effects it is the aggregates.” If the thought occurs “This is because in the context of karma and its effects it is impossible for the inner agent person to be the agent of karmic deeds and the experiencer of their effects,” that the term self does not apply to the aggregates has already been explained earlier. So, if in the context of the statement “All phenomena are no self” you do not accept that the term “self” does not apply to the aggregates, in the other context of karma and its effects too you must not assert so. If, however, the term “self” is asserted to apply to the aggregates in the context of karma and its effects, in the context of the statement “All phenomena are no self” too you will have to accept that the term “self” applies to the aggregates as well.

Furthermore there are other problems. According to you, through seeing selflessness directly, the yogi would not realize the suchness of phenomena such as form. For at that time he has seen only the nonexistence of a permanent self as imputed by the non-Buddhists. Therefore, since he engages with forms and so on by observing these as true existence, attachments and so on that takes forms and so on as their objects will still arise. [375] This is because they have no realization of the suchness of form and so on. For example, simply by saying “There are pigeons on the flower stamen” and not

experiencing the sweetness of the stamen oneself, one does not observe the sweet taste. Similarly, even if one allows that the yogi sees the aggregates to be devoid of a permanent self, nowhere do we observe that he realizes the nature of form and so on which has not been realized before. Also the simple absence of pigeons on the stamen does not entail one does not observe that taste even when enjoying that sweet taste; nor can one relinquish clinging pertaining to this. Similarly, why should there be in seeing the absence of permanent self by someone who perceives form and so on as true existence a cause for relinquishing attachment and so on with respect to form and so on? There should not be. No person cultivates the objects that leads to enjoyment of happiness with the thought that this [permanent] inner agent as person is real; nor does any person shun encountering undesirable objects with the fear that this inner permanent [self] might come to suffer. Therefore, since [such a yogi] would not have any factors that help relinquish attachment and so on, he will not attain release from cyclic existence. [Your system] will be therefore similar to the non-Buddhists. So it is understood.

iv' Presenting other objections to proposing the aggregates to be the self

This has five parts:

- 1" Explaining the meaning of the statement that all viewing of self constitutes viewing of the aggregates
- 2" Explaining, on the basis of other sutras, how the collection of aggregates is not the self
- 3" Negating the configuration of the collection of aggregates as being the self
- 4" Presenting further objections to the assertion that the mere collection of aggregates is the self
- 5" How the Sage taught that self is designated in dependence upon six elements and so on [376]

The first has three parts:

- a" Demonstrating how the intention of the scripture is from the negative perspective of eliminating the object of negation
- b" How, even if one allows this to be from the affirmative perspective, this does not present the aggregates to be the self
- c" Repudiating the arguments raised by others against these

The first is as follows.

**If you assert the aggregates to be the self
Because the Teacher has said "the aggregates are the self,"
This is to reject a self that is other than the aggregates;
For he has taught others sutras such as "form is not self."**

**In that it has been stated in other sutras
That form and feeling are not self and discrimination too**

**Is not self, volitions are not self and consciousness too,
The sutra statement does not accept that aggregates are the self.**

If [the opponent] asserts: “Validations of logicians do not undermine us who accept the scriptures to be the valid authority and the scriptures present the aggregates alone to be the self. For the Buddha has stated ‘O monks, whether it is the renunciants or the brahmins, whoever views with the thought of “self” views so only with respect to these five appropriated aggregates.’⁵⁵⁹ So because [the Buddha] taught “The aggregates are the self,” we accept the aggregates to be the self.” There in this sutra the aggregates are not being presented as the self. What it is then? That the intention of the Buddha is to reject that a self that is different entity from the aggregates as being the objective focus of the view of self. This is rejected with the term of exclusion “only” because here the texts of the non-Buddhists are being refuted from the point of view of conventional truth and the self that exists on the conventional level is being shown to be not distorted. Again, how does one understand that this negates self that is different entity from the aggregates? Because in other sutras [the Buddha] taught “Form is not self” and so on and thus form as so on as being the self is refuted. How is this refuted in the other sutras? Since it has been stated in the other sutras that form is not self, feeling is not self, recognition is not self, the mental formations too are not self, and that consciousness is not self as well, so the statement made in the sutra “It is only with respect to these five appropriated aggregates that one views as ‘I am’ [377] does not suggest that the aggregates are held to be the self. It must be determined that the term “only” negates acceptance of self that is different entity from the aggregates.

The thought may occur “Although it may be that with the term “views only” that sutra negates a self of separate reality, given that it states “One views only with respect to these aggregates,” that the aggregates are the objective focus of the self view is clearly described. So the intention of the sutra is that the aggregates *are* the objective focus of the self view.” If this is so, this will contradict the other sutras that state that the five aggregates are not the self. This is because of the two – the objective focus and the [apprehended] aspect – of the innate I-grasping that is the egoistic view, if [something] is its objective focus it must be a self. The meaning of the second [group of] sutras that teach thus there are no objections; as for its opposite, numerous objections have already been presented before and more shall be raised later. Therefore it is not the case that the first sutra demonstrates the aggregates to be the objective focus of the egoistic view. It is clear that the statement “it views the aggregates” indicates the self that is designated in dependence upon the aggregates as being the objective focus. Something that is different entity from the aggregates and the aggregates themselves have [both] been negated as being the objective focus of grasping at self. In that form and so on have been rejected in other sutras as the self, and given that it is this dependently designated self which is the objective focus of the egoistic view that appropriates the aggregates, so one should understand that intrinsic existence of the appropriator of the aggregates has been negated. The statement that form is not self and so on is made in the context of contemplating suchness. Thus if no intrinsic existence of appropriator is observed what are to be

⁵⁵⁹ Cited in MABh; see if this cited in AKBh, 9.* This exact scriptural quotation was cited earlier as well.

appropriated by that self, namely the aggregates, too will not possess intrinsic existence. It is logical then that in this way one will [378] come to be freed from the attachment clinging to true existence of form and so on.

So, through a careful comparison of the sutras, one should reject that something that is different entity from the aggregates or the aggregates to be the object of self-grasping and, on this basis, [understand] the unique mode of positing selflessness in terms of defining “self” on the power of the terms of convention alone in dependence upon the aggregates. This understanding, which has been extracted via the path of undistorted scriptural citations and reasoning, is the intention of the sutras which, despite their best efforts, many interpretators of the sutras failed to make clear. And on this basis the selflessness of phenomena too is clearly presented in that the mode of positing other phenomena are not different from [person] thus revealing bare the extremely subtle intentions of the Blessed Buddha. Therefore, one strive to understand well the unique views of the learned master [Candrakīrti] such as these.

b” How, even if one allows this to be from the affirmative perspective, this does not present the aggregates to be the self

This is as follows.

**When it’s stated “the aggregates are the self,”
This refers to their collection not to their individual natures;
They’re not the savior, nor the tamed, nor the witness;
Since this does not exist [substantially] collection is not [the self].**

One might assert the following. Although this statement that “one views the five aggregates alone” presents, from the affirmative perspective, the aggregates to be the self, it does not present the aggregates to be the self individually. For example, when one states “The trees are the forest,” it is the collection of trees that is the forest; it is not the case that each and every individual tree is being spoken of as the forest for otherwise each tree would be a forest! Thus they cite an example that is established for their opponent.

So if it is asserted [by the opponent] that the collection [of aggregates] is the self, given that [the Buddha] has stated the self to be the savior and the witness and for you [379] the mere collection cannot be the savior nor the witness as well for it does not exist as substantial reality. Therefore the self is not the mere collection. That the self has been stated to be the savior and so on is as follows. [For example] the sutra states:

One is one’s own savior;
One is one’s own enemy as well;
In doing good and evil,
One is one’s own witness.⁵⁶⁰

This states oneself to be one's own savior and witness, and it states:

Through taming oneself well
The wise attain the higher realms.⁵⁶¹

c” Repudiating the arguments raised by others against these

This is as follows.

**In that case the collection of chariot parts lying about
Will be the chariot since the chariot and self are equal;**

The thought might occur “Because collection does not exist as a different entity from the members of the collection, the effects, such as serving as the savior and so on can be realized as belonging to the members of the collection. So [the aggregates] being the savior, being tamed, and being witness remain tenable.”

As for this use of the term “self” sometimes to the collection of aggregates and at other times to [individual] aggregates that are members of the collection, objections have already been raised before that the use of the term “self” to different [referents] according to one's wishes. There are still further problems. When the collection of aggregates is asserted to be the self, there is the problem that the parts of a chariot that lie together will constitute the chariot itself. Insofar as whether they are posited in terms of the collection of their parts, the chariot and the self are equal. That they are equal is stated in the sutra:

“This is self” is Mara's thought;
You'll fall into a [wrong] view;
This aggregate of formation is empty;
There is no sentience within it.

Just as on the collection of the parts,
One speak of “the chariot,”
Likewise in dependence on the aggregates [380]
Conventionally “sentience” is spoken of.⁵⁶²

2” Explaining, on the basis of other sutras, how the collection of aggregates is not the self

This is as follows.

**Since the sutra states that it is dependent upon the aggregates,
So the mere convergence of aggregates is not the self.**

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., *

⁵⁶² * Check source sutra.

As explained before, since the sutra states that it is in dependence upon the collection of aggregates “sentience” is designated, so the convergence or the collection of aggregates is not the self. To elucidate this by means of a syllogism, “That which is designated in dependence upon something [else] is not the mere collection of the parts, which are the appropriated, and [the basis of the] designation. Since it is dependently designated it is a derivative. For example, just as although on the basis of taking the elements as conditions the derivatives, such as blue color and so on, as well as the eyes, and so on are designated, these two are not the mere convergence of the elements. Similarly, that which has the nature of being designated on the basis of taking the aggregates as conditions it is illogical for it to be the mere collection of the aggregates.”

If the thought occurs that if the sutras state “in dependence upon the collection of aggregates,” the collection would be unsuitable for being the person, however, there is only the line “Likewise in dependence upon the aggregates.” So this [sutra] is not a source for the collection of aggregates as being the support of the person.

This is incorrect. In the context of the analogy, with the line “Just as with respect to the collection of parts,” it is in dependence upon the collection of parts chariot is spoken of. So when [the person] is correlated to the chariot analogy, in the context of the line “Likewise in dependence upon the aggregates,” although the word “collection” is not explicitly mentioned, that it must be brought out is extremely clear. This is how the learned master [Candrakīrti] brings out the power of every single word of the sutras so if one comprehends these well it engenders joy in one’s mind.

If it is asserted that there is no entailment [in the above syllogism] because of [examples such as] vase and so on, these too do not exist [as such]. That vase and so on as being the mere collection of form and so on is not established; [381] and there too, they are equally subject to critical analysis just like the self. This demonstrates the similarity between the two instances – that just as self cannot be posited as the collection of its constituents, vases and so on too cannot be posited as the mere collection of their parts.

3” Negating the configuration of the collection of aggregates as being the self

This is as follows.

**“It’s the shape” if asserted, since this exists in the material [body],
For you it is this [physical body] that will be the self;
So the collection of the mind and so on will not be the self;
For these do not possess any configurations of shape.**

If one asserts the following: “The mere collection of wheels and so on is not the chariot. What is [the chariot] then? When the wheels and so on come together and acquire a special configuration, at that point, they obtain the name of chariot. Similarly, it is the mere configuration of the shape of the aggregates of the person, such as his body and so on, that exist within his continuum that is the self.”

Since this shape exists only in physical things, for you, it is these physical [aggregates] alone that constitutes the self. So self cannot be posited with respect to the host of mind and its derivative mental factors. This is because the mind and its derivative mental factors lack configurations of shape as they are not physical. This is the thought.

4” Presenting further objections to the assertion that the mere collection of aggregates is the self

**That the appropriator is identical to the appropriated is illogical;
For in that case the object of action and the agent will be the same.
If the thought arises “the agent doesn’t exist, but the object does,”
This is incorrect for without the agent there is no object of action.**

There are other problems as well. Because it is *this* that appropriates the “appropriator” [is posited] which is the self; because it is *this* that is appropriated the “appropriated” [is posited] which are the five aggregates. That these two are one thing is untenable suggests that the collection cannot be posited as the self. If the collection of aggregates such as form is the self, the object of action and the agent will become one. This, however, is not accepted for otherwise the two material forms – the elements and their derivatives – and the pot and the potter too will become one. [382] *Fundamental Wisdom* too states:

If the fuel is the fire,
The agent and the object of act become one.⁵⁶³

And:

Through [analogy of] fire and fuel,
Self and all those stages of the appropriated,
Together with vase, cloth and so on,
All [phenomena] are thoroughly explained.⁵⁶⁴

Just as, here, the fuel and fire are not accepted to be one, one must take it that the self and the appropriated [aggregates] too are not accepted to be one. Because these two [cases] have been described to be equal.

If it the thought occurs in one’s mind that there is no agent that is the appropriator of the collection of aggregates because this agent exists only as the mere convergence of the appropriated, which is the object of the act [of appropriation], this too is incorrect. This is because if there is no agent since there will be no cause there will be no act as well. *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

Likewise understand the appropriation;
The object and the agent are eliminated;
Through [this analysis of] agent and act,

⁵⁶³ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁶⁴ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

Comprehend all remaining entities.⁵⁶⁵

So through the reasoning that negate intrinsic existence the object of act and the agent one should recognize that intrinsic existence of the appropriated and appropriator too are rejected. As for the “remaining entities,” *Clear Words* states:

The produced and producer, going and goer, the viewed and viewer, the definien and the defined, that which shall come to be and that which brings them about, the parts and the whole, the qualities and the bearer of these qualities, the valid cognizer and the object of cognition, all such entities without exception are rejected as inherently existent. So those with intelligence should recognize that they exist only by virtue of mutual dependence.⁵⁶⁶

Thus [Candrakīrti] holds act and agent in general and in particular the act and agency of valid cognizer and the object of cognition [383] to be not inherently existent and [accepts them] in the mode of contingent existence. With respect to this contingent existence, there is the need to recognize that there exists a unique way of defining this in terms of a mutual dependence of both [members of a diad].

Here, with respect to the term “the appropriated” (*upādāna*), when the *lōḍa* compound is applied to the root word for an entity “*upaḍa*” it is called the “appropriated” (*upādāna*) because it appropriates. Since the entities too do not come into being without the factors that bring it about, so both that which appropriates what it brings about and the appropriator are posited as “the appropriator” (*upādāna*). If the *lōḍa* compound expresses only the act of *this* appropriating, how does it express the object of the act of appropriation? As it is found in the treatises of Sanskrit linguistics that *Kṛita* and *lōḍa* applies to most instances, this is the case in most instances. However, it is not a contradiction that when *lōḍa* compound is applied to the object of act it expresses the object of the act, which is the appropriated, as well. *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

Thus it is not separate from the appropriated,
Nor is it the appropriated themselves;
The self does not exist without the appropriated;
It’s not ascertained as nonexistence as well.⁵⁶⁷

Thus [Nāgārjuna] states that the self is not different entity from the aggregates, nor are the appropriated themselves the self; the self does not exist as not contingent upon apprehension of the appropriated, nor is the self nonexistent as well. Therefore, without there being an agent the object of the act too do not exist.

Furthermore, one should understand that the sutra on emptiness of the ultimate that states “The agent is not perceived. The karmic act exists so does its fruitional effects too” negates intrinsic existence of the agent. One should not understand this also rejects what

⁵⁶⁵ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁶⁶ PSP, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁶⁷ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

is designated through dependence and is part of the convention as well. It has been extensively stated, such as in the following: [384]

This person who follows after the pattern of ignorance also creates manifest gathering of merits as well.⁵⁶⁸

Correct Method of Exposition asserts that the first sutra is not compatible with [the approach of] the proponents of essencelessness it is compatible with the Mind Only way.⁵⁶⁹ However, the method of positing person by this most excellent system is the nonexistence even on the level of mere convention of an agent that is different entity from the aggregates and, when, on the conventional level, karmic deeds and their fruitional effects are accepted, just as stated in the latter sutra, since a person who is the agent of karmic deeds must be accepted, this is not posited from within the appropriated [aggregates] yet their appropriator is posited. This [approach] is most excellent.

5” How the Sage taught that self is designated in dependence upon six elements and so on

There are other problems for asserting the mere collection, such as that of the aggregates, as being the self.

**In that the Buddha spoke of the self in dependence upon
The six elements known as earth, water and fire,
Wind, consciousness and space, as well as the six bases,
Such as the contact of eyes and so on,**

**And by taking the phenomena of mind and mental factors,
He spoke of the “mine” therefore [the self] is neither these
Nor is it the mere collection of these;
Therefore the I-grasping thought does not [observe] these.**

For the very reason that the Buddha stated in *Sutra on the Meeting of Father and Son* that the self is described in relation to the six elements such as earth, water, fire, wind, consciousness and space, such as the space in the nostrils, as well as in relation to the six sense bases, such as sense base of contact through the eyes; “and so on” includes [up to] the sense base of contact through the mental faculty.⁵⁷⁰ He states clearly that the mind and phenomena other than it such as the derivative mental factors are designated on the basis of apprehending their designative bases. Therefore, it is untenable for the self to be the individual elements, such as earth nor is it one with them; so it is illogical for each of these to be individually the self nor is their mere collection posited as the self. So the mind that grasps in terms of “I am” which is ingrained since beginningless does not focus either on the collection or the individual [aggregates]. [385] That this is stated in the sutra is thus:

⁵⁶⁸ * MABh, *

⁵⁶⁹ Vasubandhu, * Tengyur, sems tsam, *

⁵⁷⁰ Kangyur, *

O great king, the individual, the person is the six elements, the six sense bases of contact, and the eighteen operations of the mental faculty.⁵⁷¹

In Nakts'o's translation, it reads thus: "... a convergence of six elements, with sixfold base of contact, and is with eighteen spheres of experience of mental faculty," which reads better.⁵⁷²

Here, "person" is a synonym for person; "convergence of six elements," "having a sixfold base," and "with eighteen," these three are the factors that one is endowed with so these phenomena are what one possesses. And the "person" is described as the basis on which these factors are endowed and in dependence upon which the "person" is being designated. The eighteen turnings of the mental faculty refer to the six feelings of pleasure that operate with respect to six desirable objects, the six feelings of pain that operate with respect to six undesirable objects, and the six feelings of even-mindedness that operate with respect to six neutral objects. Because it is on the power of feelings of pleasure, pain and neutrality that the mind operates repeatedly in visible form, sound and so on, they are called "operations of mental faculty."

Therefore, of the two objects – objective focus and [apprehended] aspect – of I-grasping, the aggregates are not even the object of their observation and, since something that is different entity from the aggregates does not exist as its objective focus, the object of focus of I-grasping does not have inherent existence. So through nonperception of intrinsically real self, the yogi comes to recognize that "mine" too is not endowed with the essence of intrinsic existence. And through removing bondage to all aspects of conditioned cyclic existence and without taking a subsequent rebirth, [the yogi] will definitely attain the liberation of nirva^a. Therefore, [386] not positing the individual members of the five aggregates, its collection, or something that is different entity from these as the objective focus of the self view, even then one is excellently able to posit the person that is the objective focus of the self view, and on the basis of these reasoning the person is posited as devoid of intrinsic existence. Such insight is most beautiful for those seekers of liberation who are of extremely sharp acumen. Because the extent to which this [approach] attracts one's heart cannot be found in other philosophical schools.

v' Showing how the opponent's standpoint is **irrelevant** (*'brel med*)

According to the position where when searching for the true referent of the designation "self" that is the objective focus of grasping with the thought "I am," some proposes all five aggregates to be it while others propose that mind alone is this, on this view, so long as the aggregates originate within one's continuum there will enter the grasping selfhood of person. This is because according to the approach that posits [the person] on the basis of searching for the true referent of the designation "I" in the context of the thought "I am," this [referent] would exist as the basis for grasping at selfhood of person, that is it

⁵⁷¹ Yab sras mjal ba'I mdo? *.* Kangyur, *

⁵⁷² * Nakts'o's translation?

constitutes and entity that is the [apprehended] aspect [of that self-grasping]. To state this, it reads:

**When selflessness is realized a permanent self is rejected;
This [self] which is not accepted as being the support of I-grasping;
So to claim that the knowledge of no-self eradicates
The self view is most intriguing indeed!**

At that point when you claim [the yogi] has realized selflessness directly, he would have only relinquished a permanent self, that is he would see its absence. Since this permanent self is not accepted as the object of either of observation or of [apprehended] aspect, you claim that by gaining familiarity with the sight of the absence of a permanent self the self view that is ingrained within since beginningless will be eradicated. Alas! This [claim] of yours is indeed most intriguing.

To indicate by means of an analogy of the world that there is no connection [between] seeing the absence of permanent self and the which you assert of relinquishing beginningless self-grasping through this insight, it reads:

**Seeing a snake living inside a wall crack in one's house,
When someone says "There is no elephant here" clears such suspicion,
To attempt [through this] to overcome fear of snake as well,
Alas! He will be an object of ridicule by others.**

Some foolish person, while seeing a snake living in the cracks of wall in one's own home [387] and living with fear, and when another person says "Don't be afraid. There is no elephant here in this home" and thus clears suspicion [of the presence of an elephant], by knowing that there is no elephant in that house a fear of [elephant] will be averted. However, to strive in addition to overcome his fear of snake as well [through this] is alas! an object of disapproval or ridicule by other more intelligent people.

Thus even when the condition for the fear of snake persists nearby, on the basis of the words of another foolish person one fails to see the danger posed by the presence of the snake. And instead of striving to avert the threat posed because of his knowledge that there is no elephant when he lets go of his vigilance and sits [relaxed] he will be seized by the snake. Likewise those who, holding that through gaining familiarity with the sight of the absence of elephant-like permanent self the danger posed by self-grasping that is ingrained within since beginningless will be averted, let go of their vigilance, they will not be able to remove the egoistic view that is asserted to take the aggregates as its object. Therefore, definitely this person's cyclic existence will not be undermined.

This [above stanza] demonstrates that followers of many schools, both fellow Buddhists as well as non-Buddhists, who wish to set forth suchness of things fail to understand how to eradicate the object as grasped at by the innate self-grasping. Forsaking this they set forth suchness in a different manner. All of these presentations represent striving with

hardship in objectives that are devoid of essence. It is extremely critical to be cognizant of this point.

c' Negating the remaining three positions, such as the support and the supported

This has two parts:

i' Negating the support and the supported position

ii' Summarizing the points of those that have been negated

The first is as follows. Thus having presented how the self is neither intrinsically one or separate from the aggregates, to state that the self and the aggregates do not exist inherently in a mutual relationship of the support and the supported, it reads: [388]

**The self does not exist upon the aggregates
Nor in the self these aggregates exist;
If they exist separately this should be conceived;
They do not exist as separate so this [self] is a construct.**

The self does not exist in the aggregates in the manner of being intrinsically supported nor do the aggregates exist in the manner of being intrinsically supported by the self. The reason is that if the aggregates and the self exist as inherently separate then they would be as conceived as intrinsically real support and the supported. However, since they do not exist as such intrinsically real separateness, this [conceived relationship of] inherently real support and the supported is a postulation of a distorted conceptuality alone. For example, just in the world the container and the yogurt [inside it], which are of different entities, are seen as the support and the supported, no such [relation] can be seen between the aggregates and the self. Therefore, they do not exist intrinsically as the support and the supported.

To show how the possession of aggregates too does not essentially exist in the self, it reads:

**I do not assert that the self possesses the body;
Since self does not exist no relationship of inherence exists;
Possession through difference is like the possession of cattle
And possession by inherence is like the possession of one's body;
The self is neither identical nor different from the body.**

We do not assert that the self's possession of the aggregate of form exist essentially, the reason being that since the self being intrinsically identical or different from the aggregates have already been negated [earlier] this does not exist. The relationship of self's possession of the aggregates does not exist intrinsically. With respect to the condition of such possession too, in the context of the statement such as "Devadatta possesses cattle, this [term "possession"] is applied to separate or different entities; in the statement such as "Devadatta possesses a body," it is applied to [things] that are of not

different entity. So if in the case of the statement “Devadatta possesses a body” [the term] is applied to [things] that are not different entity, the self does not exist as the body itself, that is one with it, nor does it exist as different. Therefore this [conceived reality of] intrinsic existence of self possessing a body is impossible. One should understand that these [arguments] negate intrinsic existence of [self’s] possession of the four remaining aggregates as well.

ii’ Summarizing the points of those that have been negated

Now, having presented on the basis of pulling together all the positions that have been negated earlier, [389] to enumerate the ways in which the egoistic view operates by focusing on distorted [objects], it reads:

**The body is not self nor the self possesses the body;
Self does not exist in the body nor does body in the self;
In these four manners recognize all the aggregates.
These are then held to be the twenty self views.**

**That which are disintegrated alongside when
The scepter [of wisdom] demolishes the towering self-view,
It is these twenty high peaks that reside
In the dense mountain range of egoistic view.**

(1) The form is not self yet viewing it as self, (2) the self does not essentially possess the body yet viewing it as such, (3) the body does not intrinsically possess self (4) nor does the self intrinsically possess body yet viewing as such – thus there are four [egoistic] views. Just as described in relation to the aggregate of form, in these four manners of seeing by the egoistic view, one should recognize four, four manners of viewing in relation of all four [remaining] aggregates, such as feeling. These then are accepted the as aspects of the egoistic view that views the self.

[Qualm:] It is more appropriate to add the viewing of self and aggregates as different entity and have a fivefold analysis in relation to each of the aggregates. For example, does not the *Fundamental Wisdom* too state the following?

It’s not the aggregates not is it separate;
It has no aggregates not aggregates it;
That>gata is not endowed with aggregates;
So what is the That>gata then?⁵⁷³

Therefore, the [number of] aspects should be twenty-five. So why do you speak of twenty?

[Response:] These twenty aspects of the egoistic view are presented in the sutras and the reason for positing these is that without grasping at the aggregates first the egoistic view

⁵⁷³ MMK, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

cannot cling to a self. So it views focuses on the aggregates in four, four ways and engage with the self. The fifth basis of clinging to self, which is other than the aggregates, since this is not found other than in the non-Buddhist *tirthikas*, the fifth aspect [of egoistic view] was not described [in the sutras]. The reason for the description of this fifth aspect in the *Fundamental Wisdom* is to refute the standpoint of the *tirthikas*. This is how one should understand.

Here, it is stated in the scriptures:

It is through demolishing these twenty towering peaks of the mountains of egoistic views by means of the scepter of gnosis that [390] the fruit of stream-enterer is actualized.⁵⁷⁴

This indicates that when the egoistic view mountain that focuses upon “I” and takes on the aspect of apprehending it as intrinsic existence – which, when the scepter of wisdom has not struck it leads to day by day increase in [the avalanche of] boulders of afflictions, its occurrence persists since beginningless cycl of existence, its height towers high in all three realms and pervades their surfaces in all the directions, it shoots forth from the ground of ignorance – when this [egoistic view] is dismantled or demolished by the scepter of the gnosis directly realizing no-self, the twenty high peaks that reside in the dense mountain range of egoistic views which were just mentioned that will become disintegrated together with the demolished self-view, these are the fourfold views described in relation of each of the five aggregates earlier.

Here in the translation of the commentary although it reads “One should understand that those that will disintegrate together with the towering peak are peaks [too],”⁵⁷⁵ one should read this as found in the translation of the root text as “that which occurs together with the root egoistic view.” Now since the innate egoistic view is none of the twenty views described earlier, with the line “that which reside in the dense mountain range of egoistic view,” [Candrakīrti] states that the twenty egoistic views peaks reside in the egoistic view. So the twenty [views] relinquished by the stream-enterer alongwith [root egoistic view] too are acquired [views] as well. These are not identified as grasping at intrinsic existence of “I,” it is the seed of those grasping that reinforce the validity of their mode of apprehension due to inferior philosophical tenets that were relinquished by the stream enterer.

d’ Negating substantial existing person that is neither identical nor different [from the aggregates]

This has two parts:

- i’ Presenting the opponent’s standpoint
- ii’ Refuting that standpoint [391]

⁵⁷⁴ *. * Kangyur, * MABh, as well. Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁷⁵ MABh, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

The first is as follows. Now to dispel the assertion of person as substantial reality as postulated by □ryasa^amitiṃ, it reads:

**Some accept substantially real person that is inexpressible
In terms of identity, difference, permanence and impermanence;
It is asserted to be knowable by the six classes of consciousness;
This is accepted also to be the basis of I-grasping.**

Some fellow Buddhists, the Sa^amitiṃ school, assert this. Because of the argument “Since apart from the aggregates its apprehension does not exist” the self is not different entity from the aggregates; it is not of the nature of the aggregates either, however; for if it is, the self would be endowed with birth and death. Therefore, the self or person is inexpressible as identical or different from the aggregates. Similarly, the person cannot be expressed in terms of permanence or impermanence and so on. However, this person is accepted as substantially real as well; it is asserted to be the agent of the two karmic deeds [of virtue and nonvirtue] as well to be the “consumer” of the happiness and suffering that are the effects of these two karmic deeds. It is also the chained whilst in cyclic existence and the liberated and the freed at the time of the transcendence of nirva^a. This self is asserted to be the object of knowledge of the six classes of consciousness and this self is accepted also to be the basis or the objective focus of the grasping at “I am.”

ii’ Refuting this standpoint

To explain that this substantially real person is untenable, it reads:

**As the mind is not cognized as indeterminate in relation to body,
That which exists as an entity is not perceived as indeterminate;
So if the self exists in some way as an entity,
Then like the mind it will not be indeterminate.**

For the very reason one does not understand or assert that the mind is inexpressible as identical or different in relation to body, one cannot perceive substantially real things as inexpressible with respect to identity and difference. For if some kind of “self” exists as a real entity, that is as a substantial reality, just as in the case of mind, it cannot be expressed in either of the two modes of existence [i.e. as identical or different in relation to body].

Thus having explained in this one stanza how it is impossible for something that is inexpressible to be substantially existent, now to present the person as a nominal reality, it reads:

**Since for you the essence of the vase being not a substantial entity
Becomes indeterminate with respect to matter and so on,
The self [too] will become indeterminate with respect to aggregates;
So you should not perceive it exist by virtue of its own [reality].**

For that very reason why, according to you, the nature of the vase [392] not existing as a self-sufficient entity is asserted to be indeterminate with respect to being identical or different entity from its parts, such as its form, similarly, that which is the self too becomes a nominal reality indeterminate with respect to being identical or different entity from the aggregates. Therefore you should not understand, that is hold, the person to be existent by virtue of its own essence.

Thus, having refuted [the person] to be substantially real and presented how it is established as a nominal reality, now, describing identity and difference as the support for real entity and how because it is not such support, to begin with the refutation of the self as a substantial reality it reads:

**For you consciousness is not held to be separate from one's self;
It's accepted to be different from form and so on;
So since one sees two kinds within the entities,
The self does not exist for it's devoid of substantial reality.**

If, as you claim, the self exists as substantially real, just as for you consciousness is accepted as not being different from one's self, you will have to assert that the person too is definitely not different from one's own self. Also, as you assert consciousness to be an entity that is different from form [aggregate] and so on, you will have to assert that the person too is different entity from the aggregates. Given that these two modes of identity and difference are definitely seen in things, the self does not exist as substantially real for [such] real entity is devoid of existence as identity or difference.

e' Presenting the self to be a mere dependent designation together with analogy

This has four parts:

- i' Presenting how, although the self does not exist in [any of] the seven possibilities it's dependently designated like the chariot
- ii' Extensive explanation of the two remaining positions not described before
- iii' Repudiating other's objections to such an explanation
- iv' Demonstrating how the reference of other terms of convention are established

The first is as follows.

**Therefore the support of I-grasping is not a substantial entity;
It's not other than the aggregates nor is it the aggregates;
The aggregates are not the support nor does it inhere them;**

Given that when analyzed in the manner explained before the substantial reality of person becomes untenable, the support or the objective focus of the I-grasping [393] does not exist as a real entity – that is as intrinsic existence. For when analyzed the self is neither different entity from the aggregates, nor anything that is of the nature of the aggregates –

be it a collection of individual members – is the self; the self is not the support of the aggregates nor do the self possess the aggregates as its support; this self does not exist essentially as possessing the aggregates as well. Therefore to indicate how for the fellow Buddhist schools it is appropriate to accept “Self exists as a nominal reality” or “Self as not being perceived on the ultimate level” and that they should not accept a self in the manner explained [earlier] it reads:

This establishes that it exists in dependence upon the aggregates.

Just as when one accepts this much – “This comes into being in dependence upon that” – in order that the system of conventional truth is not omitted, one does not accept arising through the four [extremes], such as no cause, here in the context of self too, we accept it as designated in dependence upon the aggregates. This is to remove the just described flawed position of the opponent to accept this much – “designated in dependence upon the aggregates” - so as to abide by the conventions of the world. For a self designated on the conventional level is incontrovertibly seen.

To elucidate the points just explained so that the self is established as a mere designation, to present an external analogy the text reads:

**The chariot is not accepted to be separate from its parts;
Not is it non-separate or possesses the parts;
It’s not in the parts nor the parts in it;
It’s not the mere collection nor is it the shape.**

The chariot is not accepted to be different from its parts; it’s not established as non-different or one [with the parts] as well; it does not possess the parts (GR says *phung po* here, check typo), nor does it dependent on its part upon the parts, or does the parts exist intrinsically as being supported by it [the chariot]; the mere assemblage of the parts and the shape of the parts are not [the chariot]. [394] In same way, one should understand [the relation of] self and the aggregates as well.

ii’ Extensive explanation of the two remaining positions not described before

This has two parts:

- 1” The actual point
- 2” Extending this argument to others

The first has two parts:

- a” Rejecting the assertion of the collection as the chariot
- b” Rejecting the assertion of mere shape as the chariot

The first is as follows. Given that the opponent’s position has already been presented before, here as the rejection of the two positions – the position concerning the collection

and concerning the shape – needs to be established, we shall initiate the presentations of these [two]

**For if the mere collection constitutes the chariot,
Then when unassembled there will be the chariot;
Since no parts exist without the whole,
That shape alone is the chariot is also untenable.**

If the mere collection of the chariot's parts constitutes the chariot, then even in the collection of parts of the dismantled chariot with its parts lying about loose there would exist the chariot. Although this negation of the collection of parts being the whole was already explained before, the significance of stating this here is to reveal an objection other than the one described earlier. There are other faults as well. For the reason that if the whole does not exist the parts too cannot exist, [for that same reason] the fellow Buddhist schools will have accepted the absence of whole with respect to the chariot.

The thought might occur "These [Buddhist school] too assert the collection of parts to be the whole and the parts to be the constituents. Similarly, they accept these two to be the whole and its parts so they did not accept the absence of the whole." If so, this is not a problem. Since in our own system both the individual and collection of the aggregates are the appropriated, they are not accepted to be the appropriator. Likewise, both individual parts as well as the collection of parts are posited as parts and not as the whole; these Buddhist schools too do not accept a whole that is not the collection but this too is being rejected [here]. The adverbial particle "also" is for the purpose of including the collection, which is not explicitly mentioned. [395] The manner in which this is included is to understand this is in the following: "Not only the mere shape of the parts tenable as the chariot; the mere collection too is untenable."

b" Rejecting the assertion of mere shape as the chariot

Furthermore, if you assert the shape alone to be the chariot, we would ask "Is that shape that of individual parts or is it that of the collection? If it is the first, is it that of those that haven't let go of the earlier specific shape when they were unassembled? Or is it that of some [the parts] that have let go of that earlier shape? If you assert to be the first, this too is illogical."

Why is this so?

**For its shape would exist earlier in each of the parts;
Likewise there will be perception of the chariot as well;
Just as in the case of the unassembled parts,
Here too [in the assembled] there will be no chariot.**

**If at the time of the chariot the wheels and so on
Possess a shape that is different [from before],
This would be perceived however this does not exist;**

Therefore the shape alone is not the chariot.

For, according to you, just as each individual parts, such as the wheels, possesses shapes prior to being assembled, later when they are assembled and is perceived as the chariot, at that time of coming into being too, [their shapes] exist as in the previous case [when remaining unassembled]. Therefore, just as the chariot does not exist in the parts when they remain unassembled and separate, at present when the parts are assemble too the chariot would not exist. This is because you posit mere shapes of the individual parts to be the chariot and insofar as their shapes are concerned there is no difference between the parts of the earlier and later [temporal] stages. Now if it is the second option, that is if it is something other than the specific shape of the previous stage that come into being subsequently that constitutes the chariot, in that case, at this present time when they exist as the chariot, there should be shapes to the parts of the chariot, such as the wheels, “and so on” include the axle, the nails, and so on, that are different from their specific shapes like square, long, circular and so on which exist [in them] previously when they remain unassembled. Such different shapes should be observable by the eyes; but this too [396] is not the case. Therefore the mere shapes of the individual parts do not exist as the chariot.

If it is thought that it is the shape of the mere collection of parts like the wheels when assembled that is the chariot, to indicate that this too is illogical, the text reads:

**Since for you collection does not exist [as a real thing],
So if this shape is not that of the collection,
If is [posited] in dependence upon what is unreal,
How can such a configuration be [tenable as the chariot]?**

If there exists to a small degree what is called “collection” that is a real entity, that is a substantial reality, one could then designate “shape” that is dependent upon this. However, there is not even the slight degree that is called “collection of parts” that exist as a substantial reality. For the very reason that, according to you, the collection does not exist – that is it does not exist as a substantial reality – the “shape” is not designated in dependence upon taking the collection of parts as its designative base. This is because you have adhered [to the view] that nominal realities such as these to have substantial realities as their designative bases alone; furthermore, you have asserted the collection of parts to be a nominal reality. Therefore, how can such as configuration that is posited as the chariot be [tenable] in this context of [defining] the chariot in dependence upon taking what is nothing – that is something that not the slightest degree of substantial reality – as the designative base? It cannot be so.

Here the opponent accepts that the nominally real entities are designated in dependence upon the existence of a self-sufficient substantial reality as its designative base, and they assert both the collection and the shape to be nominal realities. Therefore so if the collection is taken to be the designative base of the shape, although [on the surface] only a contradiction is pointed out, just as the color of the person is untenable to be the person, in the case of the chariot too, its color and shape cannot be posited as the chariot. This is

because these two are, in relation to the chariot, the objects of appropriation. This is how [this argument] should be understood.

2” Extending this argument to others

**Just as you accept in this case here,
You should recognize that in all instances
It is in dependence upon unreal causes
Effects which are unreal come to arise.**

**This [implies] that form and so on which abides in like manner,
There the perception of “vase” too would become untenable;
As there is no arising form and so on do not exist as well;
Therefore these being shape becomes untenable.**

However, if it is asserted that even though the unreal collection may be a nominal reality, [397] in dependence upon this the shape can be unreal, that is a nominally real shape, in that case, just as you accept the positing of the shape as a nominal reality in dependence upon a nominally real collection, similarly, in dependence upon unreal causes, such as ignorance, seeds and so on, you should understand that varied unreal effects, such as volitional acts and sprouts, arise. Likewise with respect to cause and effects other than these, you should understand that all causes and effects that share unreal natures arise. So what point is there in clinging to what is false as real, at these real entities that resemble shadow animals whose meat cannot be consumed despite pursuing a hundredfold efforts? Many fellow Buddhist schools claim that the collection wherein the eight atoms of the vase, such as its form atom, remain in a cohered composition *is* the vase so the thought of “vase” occurs for this. This assertion too is displaced by this chariot analogy so it is untenable.

Furthermore, since the nonexistence of intrinsic arising has already been explained before, [these entities] do not exist by virtue of an intrinsic nature. On this ground too the vase and so on that are asserted to be the objects of appropriation that are substantially real are untenable. Therefore, that vases and so on *are* specific configurations of shape remains incorrect.

iii’ Repudiating other’s objections to such an explanation

Here one might assert this. “Now if when searched for in the sevenfold way as described earlier the referent of this term ‘chariot’ do not exist, in which case, since the chariot will become nonexistent, the conventions designated in the world with respect to the chariot will come to cease. This however is untenable. We also see that one must employ [conventions] such as ‘Bring me the chariot,’ ‘But the chariot,’ and ‘Repair the chariot.’ [398] Therefore as they are known to the world [things] such as chariot do exist.”

Since between the two of us this fault applies only to you I shall level this against you. How is this so? It is on the basis of searching through analysis for the true referent of the

designated term that you posit the chariot, and you do not accept there to be any alternative method of positing apart from searching for the true referent of the designated term. When the referent of the designation is searched for in the sevenfold way, how can conventions such as “Bring me the chariot” remain established for you?

This is how the author of the treatise responds to the [above] argument. [In contrast] today's Tibetans who claim to be Prasaṅgika maintain that this argument that if the chariot cannot be found when searched for in the sevenfold way the chariot cannot be posited to be the Middle Way school's standpoint. In doing so they effortfully soil the perfect system with dirty water of inferior conceptualizations. For us, however, the fault raised by the argument presented earlier do not exist.

**Although it does not exist in these sevenfold possibilities
Both on the level of suchness as well as worldly [convention],
Without such analysis and through worldly [convention] alone,
Here it is designated in dependence upon its parts.**

Although it is the case that the chariot does not come to exist either on the level of suchness, that is on the ultimate level, or on the worldly conventional level when searched for its designated reference in the sevenfold way, even then without analysis searching for the reference of the designation [but] on the basis of worldly convention alone the chariot is, just like blue [color], feeling, and so on, is posited here in dependence upon its parts like the wheels and so on. Therefore, just as one accepts dependent origination through mere conditions with respect to seed and sprout, one accepts the chariot too to be designated in dependence upon its parts. Therefore, for us, the conventions of the world like “Bring the chariot” and so on do not become untenable. For the opponent too [390] it is appropriate to accept this.

As [Candrakīrti] states thus one should indicate that in this Middle Way system that does not posit on the basis of searching for the true reference of the “chariot” the worldly conventions are accepted and that the opponent too should accept them. When the objections raised against the opponent are turned back and when one fails to effectively answer them, do not assert that I have no position.

iv’ Demonstrating how the reference of other terms of convention are established

This is as follows.

**This is itself the whole and the constituted;
The chariot is called the “agent” and “moving;”
To the people it is labelled as the “appropriator;”
Destroy not the conventions known to the world.**

Not only is it most clearly established that in this Middle Way position the chariot designates on the basis of the conventions of the world, other characteristics of the name “chariot” do not exist in the manner of being sought for their true reference but are

accepted within the framework known to the world. Here, the “chariot” is in relation to its parts like the wheels and so on it is the “whole;” again, in relation to its constituents like the wheel, it is the “constituted;” again from the point of view of the action of appropriating what are appropriated, such as the wheels, it is termed the “agent” of mobility; and in relation to the objects of its appropriation like body and so on the persons are established also as “appropriators.”

Some, understanding the meaning of the scriptures distortedly, assert that the mere collection of the parts exist and no bearer of the parts that is not that mere collection exist all. For nothing is perceived that is of different entity from that collection. Likewise they extend this [reasoning] and claim that only collections of constituents, actions and the appropriated exist; no other constituted, agent, or appropriator exist at all for nothing that is different entity from these [collections] are perceived. According to these who propound in this manner distortedly the established conventions of the world, [400] for them, the very reasoning just described that no bearer of parts exist makes the mere collection of parts to be nonexistent. So destroy not, that is do not cause the disintegration of the conventions known to the world, such as the chariot. This is definitely to be averted alone.

Here, the reason why other fellow Buddhist schools, both high and low, assert the collection of parts and so on to be the bearer of the parts and so on is this. If these are not posited as the bearer of the parts, since no [bearer of parts] that is of different entity from these [collections] is perceived they come to fail to posit bearer of parts and so on that are capable of functioning. So they assert in this manner. For them, if something is not found when searched for for their true reference of designation they do not know how to posit them. Therefore they do not accept the chariot and so on to be mere designation as names so accept them as existing by virtue of their own characteristics. To this, the commentary refers to as “distorted understanding of the meaning of the scriptures.” [In contrast] in this excellent system [of Candrakīrti] even though mere collection of parts or the individual parts are not held to be the defined identity [of the things] the ability to posit effective functions to bearer of parts within the framework of mere designation as names is interpreted as the intention of the scriptures. Given that this is the unique intention of the Sage those with critical acumen should train in this method of interpreting the intention [of the scriptures].

f’ Demonstrating the benefits of how by positing thus it is easy to abandon conceptualization grasping at extremes

This has five parts:

- i’ The actual point
- ii’ Repudiating objections against this
- iii’ Correlating the terms of “chariot” and “self” as analogy and reference
- iv’ Presenting other benefits to accepting dependently designated self
- v’ Identifying the self that is the basis of bondage and freedom of the learned and the foolish

The first is as follows. [401]

**That which does not exist in the sevenfold way,
The existence of this the yogi shall not find;
Through this he will easily enter its suchness as well;
Therefore accept its existence in this [unanalyzed] manner.**

In that this conventional truth of the world is not found to exist when analyzed as before through searching the true reference of designation, [yet] it exists through unexamined worldly renown alone, when the yogi analyzes the self and chariot as [described] before he will most swiftly penetrate the depth of their suchness.

How is this so? For if the chariot is an intrinsic existence, when searched for through the sevenfold way it should be found in terms of one of the seven ways; however, the yogi does not find the existence of this chariot. In that case what is not found when searched for through the sevenfold way, how can it exist intrinsically; it does not. Therefore a sense of certainty will arise in the yogi that this so-called inherent existence of chariot is something only imputed by someone whose awareness eyes are undermined by the cataracts of ignorance; there is no intrinsic existence [at all]. Through this way the yogi will easily enter into suchness. The term “as well” encompasses how [the yogi] will not violate the presentations of conventional truth as well. Therefore in the context of Middle Way school here one should accept the mode of existence of the chariot in such manner.

As [Candrakirti] states that those learned in the the Middle Way system must maintain that the [Middle Way] position described above is flawless and is endowed with merits, one should accept within one’s own tradition this system is flawless. Pray do not **place the blame upon** (*gnong bkur ba*) it by asserting that it has no standpoints.

ii’ Repudiating objections against this

The opponent might say “Although it may be true that when analyzed in the above manner the yogi [402] does not observe the chariot, perception of the mere collection of its parts do exist intrinsically.” You who search for threads of yarn in midst of ashes where a woollen cloth has been burned are indeed a source of laughter.

**If the chariot does not exist in that case
There is no whole so are no parts as well;
Just as when the chariot is burnt there remain no parts,
The wisdom fire burnt the whole so too the parts.**

If the chariot does not exist intrinsically in that case the whole does not exist inherently; so the parts too do not inherently exist.

“Why when the chariot is dismantled into individual [parts] is not the collection of [parts] such as the wheels not perceived? So why do you assert that with no whole no parts exist

as well?” It is not like this. That one holds the dismantled individual parts as being parts of the chariot is due only to having recognized these in relation to the chariot so one has the thought “these wheels and so on are parts of the chariot.” Someone who did not cognize this before do not hold this. These persons will realize the wheels and so on alone as the whole in relation to their own respective constituents. Within the perspective of such a person the wheels and so on are far removed from being related to the chariot so at that point they are not recognized as parts of the chariot. Furthermore, that if the chariot does not exist intrinsically its parts too do not exist intrinsically can be understood on the basis of the following analogy as well. Just as, for example, when the chariot, the whole, is burnt its parts too will be burnt, similarly, through the fire of intelligence or wisdom realizing the nonobjectified [emptiness] on the basis of striking together the lighting sticks of critical analysis, when the whole, the intrinsic existence of chariot is burnt completely, the parts too that are the firewoods for wisdom fire [403] too will be incapable of standing with its reality intact, that is as intrinsic existence.

iii’ Correlating the terms of “chariot” and “self” as analogy and reference

This is as follows.

**Likewise through being known to the world
In dependence on aggregates, elements and the six sense bases,
The self too is accepted to be the appropriator;
The appropriated as the objects and it’s an agent as well.**

Just in order not to eliminate the conventional truth and in order that the yogis easily enter suchness dependent designations were presented on the basis of contemplating the chariot analysis, likewise, through being known to the world, in dependence upon the appropriated – the five aggregates, the six elements, and similarly the six sense bases - just like the chariot we accept the self to be appropriator. For it is in dependence upon these [factors] the self is designated. In the same manner the appropriated aggregates are the object and this self is the agent as well. Thus they are posited.

iv’ Presenting other benefits to accepting dependently designated self

When the self is posited on something that is dependently designated, since it does not become the support for such extreme-tending views as it’s immutable, its mutable, and so on, it becomes easy to cease such conceptualizations as conceiving inherent existence of it as impermanent and so on. To state this, the text reads:

**Since it does not exist as a real entity it’s not immutable;
It’s not mutable, it does not arise nor disintegrate;
It does not possess [properties] like permanence and so on;
It does not exist either terms as indentity or difference.**

This self that is designated in dependence upon the aggregates do not have intrinsic existence as being immutable or mutable. For if the self exists inherently as mutable since

the self and the appropriated cannot be different entity the appropriated themselves will become the self. In that case since it will undergo arising and disintegration during its individual moments [of existence] the preceding and the subsequent stages will become unrelated; and what are to be appropriated will become the appropriator. So this is untenable. Similarly, it being immutable or permanent too is untenable. For if it is permanent the very self that emerged in the past lives will be the self that has come into being in this life; [404] and since the appropriated aggregates of the self of past lives and of this life are different entity the self cannot be one for there is no self that is different entity from the appropriated [aggregates]. *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

If the aggregates are the self,
It will be subject to arising and disintegration;⁵⁷⁶

As stated here “to cite both, that is not arising and not disintegrating, is master [Nḡrjuna’s] intention” says [Candrakīrti]. Arising and disintegration [here] refer to that of inherent existence.

This self does not possess the set of four qualities, such as permanence. This is similar to what *Fundamental Wisdom* states when through the method of analyzing the Thatḡgata one engages in the contemplations, where it reads:

The four, permanence, impermanence and so on,
How can their pacifications exist in it?⁵⁷⁷

This self does exist intrinsically as identical or different entity [from the aggregates]. The reason for these is that an intrinsically real entity called self does not exist. A sūtra states:

These four inexhaustible facts
Were revealed by the savior of the world:
Sentient beings, space and awakening mind,
Likewise the qualities of the Buddha.

If these exist as substantially real,
Would not these be then exhaustible?
That which does exist do not exhaust;
Therefore they are described as inexhaustible.⁵⁷⁸

The statement that because sentient beings do not exist as substantial realities they are inexhaustible is an authoritative source here.

v’ Identifying the self that is the basis of bondage and freedom of the learned and the foolish

⁵⁷⁶ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁷⁷ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁷⁸ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

This is as follows.

**Whereas the mind grasping at “I” always occur
In the sentient beings so the “self” on the basis of which
Such mind grasping at “I” come into being,
This [exists] unexamined because of delusion.**

When searched for through the sevenfold way for the true reference of designations permanence and impermanence become impossible. Failing to see the self to be not intrinsic existence and clinging to it as intrinsic existence due to the power of ignorance, those who cling on to it with egoistic views as intrinsic existence, [405] they revolve in the cycle of existence. When thoroughly searching for the self the non-Buddhist *tirthikas* see through their searching analysis that it is untenable for the aggregates themselves to be the self. Thus all those [*tirthikas*] who are distorted with respect to the nature of this self cling to it to be different entity from the aggregates. Our fellow Buddhist schools too, feeling that there is no self that is different different entity from the aggregates, mistakenly they accept the aggregates alone to be the self. The assumption is that one must adhere to one of these two options.

As for those who interpret the meaning of the scriptures without distortion, they recognize that it [self] does not exist in either of above two ways and comes to be free a hundred times. That is the self and it is with relation to this that for all beings that reside in such realms as that of the humans, hungry ghosts, animals, and so on, constantly on the basis of this objective of focus the mind grasping at “I” thoroughly occurs. And with respect to internal factors – which are the support for the designation of this self, such as the eyes and so on, upon which this self exerts control that which are related to that self alone – and external factors which are owned by that self, the thought “mine” occurs. Such a self exist through delusion or ignorance within the perspective of unexamined renown; it does not exist by virtue of its own essence.

Even though this self does not exist intrinsically because it is designated with convention as existing through delusion or ignorance, the yogi never perceives such self. Though he does not perceive this he also will not perceive the appropriated of this self, such as eyes, as well. Thus there are no real entities as basis of the self and “mine” with respect to which the yogi [406] perceives inherently existent. He will therefore attain freedom from the cycle of existence. *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

If with respect to inner and outer facts,
The thought of self and mine ceases,
Appropriation will come to an end;
And with cessation of this birth ceases.⁵⁷⁹

2’ Negating intrinsic existence of “mine”
This is as follows.

⁵⁷⁹ MMK, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

**Just as when there is no agent the act is no more,
So the “mine” does not exist without the self;
Thus viewing the self and “mine” to be empty,
The yogi shall attain utter freedom.**

How is that if the self does not exist intrinsically that the “mine” too would not exist intrinsically? Just as, for example, without the agent the potter the object of the act, the clay pot, would not exist so intrinsic existence of “mine” too would be nonexistent alone without intrinsic existence of the self. Therefore when the yogi views both the self and mine to be empty and becomes familiar with this, he shall become thoroughly free from the cycle of existence.

When one does not perceive form and so on as not intrinsic existence the afflictions, such as attachment, that conceive of form and so on as intrinsic existence will come to cease. Therefore the Disciples and the Self-Enlightened Ones transcend to nirva^a without taking further rebirth. As for the bodhisattvas, even though they may have already seen absence of such self, due to the power of compassion they uphold births in the continuum of cyclic existence until their [full] awakening. So since it is the most essential point of the paths of both Lesser and Great vehicles, the learned ones should thoroughly search for the no-self just as explained [in this Candrakīrti’s text].

(iii) Extending the analysis of self and chariot to other

This has two parts:

- 1’ Extending this to entities such as vases and woollen clothes
- 2’ Extending this to cause and effect entities
- 3’ Repudiating objections by others to this

The first is as follows. Now to show that just as the designations of self and its appropriated [aggregates] are similar to the chariot analysis so too is the analysis of other entities, the text reads:

**All such things as vases, woollen or burlap cloths, battles, forests,
And garlands, trees, houses, mini-chariots, rest houses and so on,
Like these one should understand all conventions used by the person;
Because the Sage does not enter into a dispute with the world.**

For the reason when these things like vases, woollen and burlap clothes, battle, [407] forests, garlands, trees, houses, mini-chariots, and rest houses are analyzed through the chariot analysis, and when searched for for the reference of their designations through the sevenfold way, there are not existent. In a way different from this, that is without analysis, through worldly renown, they are existent. With respect to “mini-chariot” some Tibetan teachers say that [the Sanskrit term] *Yakakra*, which literally means “with wheels,” stands for mini-chariot. It can carry about three tee boxes and consists of a cabin with wheels and spaces in between as well.

Likewise all conventions designated by this person on the basis of other entities that belong to similar class, these too should be realized as existing only on the level of unexamined renown. It is for this reason that the Sage states that he does not enter into dispute with the world. The *Presentation of the Three Vows* in the *Jewel Stacked* [collection] states:

The world disputes with me; I, however, do not dispute the world.⁵⁸⁰

Thus it states that the Sage accepts what are posited through unimpaired conventions of the world. Therefore one must not harm the known conventions of the world. How do the worldly people designate the conventions and by means of what entities? To explain this the text reads:

**“Parts,” “qualities,” “attachment,” “definiens,” “fuel” and so on,
“Quality bearer,” “whole,” “attached,” “defined,” “fire” and so on,
These do not exist when subject to the chariot analysis;
They exist in another mode that is through worldly renown.**

Just as the vase is the whole and its burnt clay and so on its constituents, the vase the quality bearer and its bluish [color] and so on caused by flames the qualities, the sentient beings or persons who are attached to the attractive objects, namely the support of attachment, they are the attached while excessive craving focused on contaminated objects that are attractive [408] is the attachment, the vase is the defined and having a bulbous body, with a sprout and long neck and so on are its definitions; fire is that which burns and the fuel is that which is being burnt, and so on. Thus in dependence upon the parts the “whole” and in dependence upon the whole “parts” are designated; similarly up to fire and fuel they are designated on the basis of mutual dependence. When searched for the reference of their designations through the sevenfold way although these do not exist that they can be posited to be existent is through the conventions of the world; they do not lend [themselves] to the analysis probing into suchness.

2’ Extending this to cause and effect entities

Not only are the parts and so on exist through mutual dependence, to explain that cause and effect too exist through mutual dependence, it reads:

**For if [the effect] is produced because the cause produced it then it is the cause;
If it does not produce effects because it does not exist there will be no cause;
The effects too come to arise when there is the cause,
Since one comes into being from the other tell us which comes to be first ?**

If you say that the cause produces the effect through contacting it,

⁵⁸⁰ Kangyur, * Ratnakuta, *

**Since both will then have the same potencies the producer and the effect will not different;
If they are different the cause will no different from the non-causes;
Yet apart from these two [modes] no concepts [of causation] exist.**

**Since for you the cause will not produce the effect therefore what is called “Effect” would not exist so the cause for freedom will become a noncause;
Since [for us] both of these are illusion-like so therefore
We are not open to these faults and the entities of the world exist as well.**

When for the reason that the effect that is to be produced by the cause is being produced, in that case that which produces is the cause; if however the effect is not being produced since that [act of] production does not exist the effect will be without cause. If the effect do become [something] possessing a cause, then from it [the effect] come to arise. Therefore the two – cause and effect – also exist through mutual dependence; they do not exist by virtue of intrinsic nature. If however cause and effect are thought to be inherently established, alas in dependence on what cause or an effect these two will come to be? That is between these two first tell us what constitutes the cause and what constitutes the effect? Within the realm of intrinsic existence the cause being prior is illogical because at the time of the cause, the effect, which is the factor upon which the cause is dependent, must exist. The effect being prior too is illogical for [the effect] will then become causeless. Therefore, one should understand what are designated as cause and effects too as established through mutual dependence just like the chariot; [409] they do not exist [as such] by virtue of their intrinsic nature.

Furthermore, if the cause produces its effect intrinsically does it do so on the basis of coming into contact with the effect or not? If, according to you, the cause produces the effect on the basis of coming into contact with it, in that case, the cause and effect will share the same potency; this is just like, for example, the coming into contact between the waters of a river and an ocean. If they do constitute one [potency] one will not be able to distinguish by saying “This is the cause” and “This is the effect.” And since that the producer and the effect will become not distinct what produces what? However, if it is produced without coming into contact with each other then what is asserted to be the cause of that effect will be indistinguishable from those that are not the cause insofar as producing or not producing [the effect] is concerned. Given that for those who speak of cause and effect to be intrinsic existence, apart from the options of the producer and the produced coming into contact with each other or not, no other third conception [of an option] exists. Therefore it is certainly the case that intrinsically real cause does not produce effects. So given that it is not the case that as per your [claim] intrinsically real cause produces effects, what is called the effect too does not exist by virtue of intrinsic nature. The ground for defining cause as a cause is that the effect originates; if however being devoid of effect, that is without effect, the cause can be defined as a cause, in that case there will be no ground for positing the cause to be a cause. This, however, is not the case. Therefore cause and effect do not have intrinsic existence.

How then is this [to be understood] according to you? Now to the opponent who asserts the producer and the produced as existing by virtue of their own self-defining characteristics, one engages into the analysis of whether the two come into contact or not [410] and there will be faults for both the two options. However, according to whom things come to be produced through the power of false constructions and are posited as mere conventions by conceptualization, both cause and effect resemble an illusion and are not intrinsically arisen. Although there are devoid of intrinsic existence, just like the net of hair perceived by the person with cataracts, they are objects posited as mere conventions by conceptualization. So to this [view] the objections leveled against the assertion of intrinsically real cause and effect cannot be contemplated upon. Therefore, for me the objections just referred to, that is whether the two come into contact or not, does not apply and all entities known to the world that exist on the level of the unexamined [perspective], such as cause and effect, the chariot and so on, do exist; so everything is established.

Here the commentary must be read to state that if the objections leveled against cause and effect qualified with such objects of negation as “intrinsically” and “existing by virtue of one’s own essence” are turned back on the proponent of illusion-like with no-intrinsic existence, they do not apply. One must not engage in giving seeming pseudo responses alone without differentiating between the two terms, that of intrinsic existence and existence.

3’ Repudiating objections by others to this

This has two parts:

- a’ The argument that the same faults apply to the negation of intrinsic existence of cause and effect
- b’ Presenting the responses that the same fault do not apply to us

The first is as follows.

**“Does the refutation refutes what is to be refuted without coming into contact with it
Or coming into contact with it?” Does not this fault apply to you as well?**

Here, in response to the refutation of intrinsic existence of cause and effect, some charge that this analysis of whether the cause and effect come into contact applies equally to you too. How is this so? [They assert:] Now with respect to your refutation, does it refute what is to be refuted on the basis of coming into contact with it or it refutes this without coming into contact with it? Does not this fault apply to you as well? [411] Yes it does.

Now if it is refuted on the basis of coming into contact it, then since [the two] will become identical what is refuting what? If, however, it refutes without coming into contact with it, then everything else that equally do not come into contact with it should

refute it as well, this is illogical. Apart from these two horns of the enquiry, there exist no other third option of enquiry. When pursued thus your refutation does not [appear to] have the capacity to refute what is to be refuted. So since your own refutation is thus refuted implicitly the cause and effect entities [are affirmed to be] intrinsic existence. To state this the text reads:

**Because through the fallacy that applies equally to your own words
You denigrate all entities without no sound logic,
You'll not be liked by the sublime ones and since you do not have
Your own position you will be an abuser of refutation [logic] as well. 172**

If you utter such psuedo refutations and undermine your own positions alone, in that case you shall not be able to refute the opponent's standpoint, which is what is to be refuted. Furthermore, because you denigrate all entities with no sound logic and through psuedo refutations due to the fallacy of being oneself equally subject to the same ill consequences leveled against the opponent, you shall not be [highly] thought of or liked by the sublime ones.

How is this so? What logic is there to the argument that "If [the effect] is being produced without coming into contact [with it] it must be produced by everything that equally do not come into contact with it; these do not produce [the effect]?" For example, a magnetic object pulls forth metal objects that remain present at locations where they are not in contact with [the magnetic object]. It does not pull forth everything that are not in contact with it. The eyes too see visible forms that only exist in locations that cannot come into with the eyes and does not see everything that is not in contact with the eyes. Similarly, although the cause produces an effect that is not in contact with it this does not make it produce everything that is not in contact with it. It will produce only those that are suitable to be its effects. Furthermore, you will become a protagonist that abuses [the logic of] refutation. [412] For if the protagonist that is devoid of positing one's own position and engages only in refuting other's position is termed abuser of logic, you too remain in this mode. This is how [the opponent] objects.

b' Presenting the responses that the same's fault do not apply to us

This has four parts:

- i' How within one's position refutation and syllogism are tenable
- ii' Clear explanation of the reason why other's consequences do not equally apply
- iii' How just as no-intrinsic existence can be established its contrary cannot be established by the opponent
- iv' How to understand the remaining refutations not explained here

The first two parts:

- 1'' How on the conventional level refutation of other's position is accepted
- 2'' How the establishment of one's own position is accepted

The first is as follows.

**The fault already mentioned “Does the refutation refutes what is
To be refuted without encountering it or by encountering it?”
This will certainly apply to the one who has the position;
Since I do not have that position these consequences remain impossible.**

Here I shall explain thus. The fault already mentioned above concerning whether the refutation refutes what is to be refuted on the basis of coming into contact with it or refutes it with coming into contact, this applies to the protagonist that has the position, that is the one who adheres to the thesis of intrinsic existence. Since I do not have this position adhering to the thesis of intrinsic existence this consequence of fault that is revealed to both of two positions of coming into contact and not coming into contact remain impossible for me. For according to us we accept both the refutation and what is to be refuted to be not intrinsic existence.

As the reason for why the faults pertaining to the analysis of whether the cause produces the effect on the basis of coming into contact with it not does not equally apply to ourselves the commentary cites that the opponent accepts cause and effect to be intrinsic existence while we accept them to be illusion-like with no intrinsic existence. Here too for the reason why the flaws charged against the opponent does not turn back upon ourselves [Candrakīrti] states [that cause and effect] are not intrinsic existence. [413] Therefore one must accept without any doubt that the reason why [the faults] do not equally apply to us is that we do not adhere to both positions as being intrinsic existence. Therefore *Averting the Arguments* states:

For if I have some thesis,
Then I shall be open to that fault;
Since I do not have thesis,
I am without fault alone.⁵⁸¹

One should understand the meaning of statements such as these on having no thesis and position as [explained] above. *Mother of Conquerors* states:

“Subhuti, is it through an arisen phenomena that the unborn attainment of attained? Or is it through an unborn truth that the unborn attainment is attained?” Subhuti replied: “/ariputra, I do not assert that it is through an arisen phenomena that the unborn attainment is attained; nor do I assert that it is through an unarisen truth that the unborn attainment is attained.” /ariputra stated: “What, there is no attainment and no clear realization then?” Subhuti replied: “Although attainment do exist and clear realization do exist, they do not do so in [this] dichotomous manner. /ariputra, attainment and clear realizations are on the level of worldly

⁵⁸¹ VV, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

conventions; on the ultimate level, however, there is no attainment nor clear realizations.”⁵⁸²

So this is as extensively stated [there]. Here, up to the section “I do not assert that ... the unborn attainment is attained,” [the citation] negates attaining the object of attainment through [one of] the two options when thus analyzed given that when the object of attainment and [the method of] attainment are searched for through seeking the reference of their designations they cannot be found. [414] Furthermore since the object of attainment [affirmed through] binary analysis remains untenable for entities that are intrinsic existence, one accepts attainment on the level of unexamined worldly convention. This is presented in the section from “Attainment too exists” up to “they do not do so in [this] dichotomous manner.” “Attainment” refers to “attainment of object of attainment” and to “clear realization.” Just as these two do not exist on the ultimate level and are accepted on the nominal level, similarly, although the method of refutation does not refute what is to be refuted on the ultimate level, one should understand that it does refute on the nominal level.

2” How the establishment of one’s own position is accepted

**Just as the features that exist in the sun can be seen
In its reflection as well such as when it is eclipsed,
It’s illogical [to analyze] whether the sun and reflections met,
Yet through dependence they come into being as mere conventions.**

**While unreal in order to make one’s face beautiful one acts as if
[Facial features] exist [in the mirror image], here too to cleanse
Wisdom face one should understand that through reasonings as well
Seen as Possessing such capacity devoid of evidence [for intrinsic existence]
what is to be proven is realized.**

Furthermore, for example, in dependence upon seeing reflections characteristics that exist in the sun and face, such as when the sun is being eclipsed and so on, can be perceived. When analyzed whether [they, the reflections,] arise on the basis of coming into contact with the sun and the face or on the basis of not coming to contact, their arising remains untenable. Nevertheless, in dependence upon the sun and face a reflection that is merely posited through the power of convention do emerge which, in turn, help ascertain the desired aim. Even though the reflection is unreal it possesses the capacity to help achieve [the aim of] making one’s face beautiful. Here too, likewise, to cleanse the face-like wisdom of its stain of ignorance one should understand that through reasoning proofs, such as that of dependent origination and the absence of identity and difference, that are seen [to possess] the capacity, the object of established, no-intrinsic existence is realized. These are the reasoning proofs that are [help make] intrinsic existence devoid of evidence that affirm it. The adverbial term “as well” [415] [indicates] that one should understand as well that the [logic of] refutation that [help make] intrinsic existence devoid of evidence too is capable of refuting what is to be refuted.

⁵⁸² Kangyur, shes phyin, * Cited in MABh as well*

In that for those who propound [things] as nominal realities as mere names it is inappropriate to speak in binary terms searching for the reference of the designations, by employing refutations based on binary terms and responding in such manner they shall not find any opportunity at all for argument against the Middle Way school. *Four Hundred Stanzas* states:

“Exists,” “does not exist,” neither exists nor does not exist” –
 He who does not have such positions,
 For him even for a long while,
 No arguments can be made.⁵⁸³

Fundamental Wisdom too states:

When argued with [logic of] emptiness,
 He who resorts to uttering responses,
 No replies should be given to all his [defences];
 Else it will be same as what is being affirmed.⁵⁸⁴

On this basis of analyzing the refutation and what is being refuted in terms of whether they come into contact or not one should understand also that with respect to cause, the producer, too it should be negated by analyzing it in terms of whether it comes into contact with the effect or not. Here in this respect Bhāvaviveka writes:

Here in this *Treatise on the Middle Way*, the context is that of the producing cause and not that of the manifesting cause. So the analysis of whether or not they come into contact too is relevant to a manifesting cause, and not to a producing cause. Therefore, there is no basis [for the charge] that our words suffer the fallacy of *ltag chod*.⁵⁸⁵

This statement that respect to manifesting cause within producing cause and with respect to explanatory cause such as reasoning proof, they cannot be subject to analysis of whether or not they come into contact [with their effects] is not an [effective] answer. For if the opponent responds to this by raising objections and flaws this is because the opponent does not bear this. So just as the faults apply to the acceptance of producing cause as true existence, with respect to manifesting cause too, if one accepts it to be intrinsic existence the fault persists. Furthermore, this Bhāvaviveka [416] utters responses that suffer the fallacy of *ltag chod* against the refutation stated by the opponent towards the proofs cited in the treatise to establish the thesis of no-intrinsic existence, this is something only to be refuted by the opponent. Therefore our response that if one accepts intrinsic existence the faults pertaining to whether or not they come into with [their

⁵⁸³ CS, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁸⁴ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁸⁵ *Lamp of Wisdom*, * Tengyur, dbu ma, * This is cited in MABh and critiqued.

effect] remains equal for a producing cause and a manifesting cause, we do not accept this [i.e. intrinsic existence] is far more elegant.

ii' Clear explanation of the reason why other's consequences do not equally apply [to us]

This is as follows.

**If for us the signifying proof of what is to be proven exists as real entity,
And if the essence of the directly signified, the object of the proof, exists,
Then the argument of whether they encounter and so on does apply;
Since these too do not exist it will lead you only to mental fatigue.**

If the reality of our reasoning proofs that signify the object of proof and the reality of what are actually to be proven are intrinsic existence then the argument whether the object of the proof and the proof come into contact or not will come to apply. However, since there is no such intrinsic existence the flaws that are leveled against an unsound position, which you turn against a sound position, remains pointless; you should realize that this will only be a source of frustration and disappointment. For example, just as refuting the various positions pertaining to the nets of hair seen by someone with cataracts, such as a one strand of hair, many strands, round balls [of hair], black [hair] and so on, does not adversely affect those who do not have cataracts, when one analyzes the cause and effects with intrinsic existence the refutations you level [against us] on the basis of binary analysis of searching for the reference of designations do not harm us as well. Therefore, one should understand that the examples cited by the opponent such as the presentations of how the eyes and magnetic objects function without coming into contact [with their respect objects] too are rejected. For if one adheres to intrinsic existence [417] the consequences pertaining to whether they come into contact or not apply to these equally as well.

This extreme hardship of taking joy in impeding the perfect path through abandoning the correct path of no-intrinsic existence and [traveling on] an extremely twisted path of base concepts, which has been paved by the inferior mason that is your own conceptualization, what need does this serve for you?

iii' How just as no-intrinsic existence can be established its contrary cannot be established by the opponent

**Just as it will be highly easy to enable one
To realize all things as not real entities you will not be capable
Equally to let others easily comprehend the intrinsic nature;
Who forces you to plunge this world into a network of base concepts?**

Furthermore on the basis of examples, such as illusion and mirage alone, which are established on the part of the opponents as well, to enable the opponent to realize the entities of the world to be devoid of real entity, that is intrinsic existence, is most easy. It is however not equally easy to enable the other, that is the Middle Way proponents, by

the opponent to comprehend the entities as intrinsic existence. This is because there exist no examples that are known for both parties. This states that for a reasoning establishing absence of true existence, such as that of dependent origination, there is no way of ascertaining the pervasion that whatever is dependent origination it must be devoid of true existence on the subject without ascertaining it with respect to a concordant example [first].

Therefore, I [Candrakīrti] have averted all the arguments of the proponents of real entities and no one shall be able to appropriately respond to these [repudiations]. So who is assigning or forcing you to cause injury to the world? In addition to the world of beings already wrapping themselves inside a thicket of their own inferior concepts like a silkworm, **why do you excessively strengthen a net woven with threads of base concepts and thoroughly ground their base?** You should discard this argument based on grasping at true existence. For with respect to all these false entities that resemble mirror reflections what individual characteristics and general characteristics [417] as well as direct perceptions and inferences are there that have intrinsic existence? [In this context] here there remains only one direct perception with regard to the entire realm of knowledge, namely, the gnosis of omniscience.

iv' How to understand the remaining refutations not explained here

**The remainders of the refutation should be understood as presented before;
[The repudiation] aimed at responding to positions such as encountering
should be let gone;
Since there is likewise no one to engage in refutation,
So as for remainders of refutation understand these on the basis of this
standpoint.**

In the context of setting forth such presentations as the dependent originations – such as in the case of the arising of sprout in dependence upon the seed – and dependent designations – such as the case of the designation of person in dependence upon the aggregates – all remaining [arguments] following what have already been cited against the position of the essentialists, such as whether the cause produces the effect through coming into contact with it or without it, which were already described earlier, these too should be understood. And in the context of the opponent's argument whether the refutation refutes what is to be refuted on the basis of coming into contact with it or not coming into contact, which was proposed to respond to our negation through analysis of whether the cause produces the effect through coming into contact with it or not, one should discharge the [logic of] refutation that this analysis does not equally apply [to us]. What has been [explicitly] presented above represent only an illustration.

The purpose of engaging in refutation and positing [one's own standpoint] in the treatise *Fundamental Wisdom* is to express the wish to cease the conceptualization of true existence alone. This we have already explained [earlier] in the section [related to the line] "The ordinary beings are chained by conceptualizations."⁵⁸⁶ Therefore how can

⁵⁸⁶ MA, 6:* Cite the corresponding page number in Rapsel as well.

there be an abuse of refutation [logic] in the treatise [*Fundamental Wisdom*]? The one who abuses refutation [logic] is the one who, fearing that if one posits his own standpoint it will open to flaws, so engages in refutation of other's positions. Here there are no positions of others that are being eliminated that exist on the ultimate level. For on the ultimate nothing exists at all. Therefore how can there be an abuse of refutation logic [by us]? For this reason the one for whom one's own position cannot be posited yet the averting of other's position exist on the ultimate level, [419] such characterization [of refutation logic] constitutes a correct definition of the abuse of refutation logic. However given that there is no Mādhyamika who does not posit one's own position on the nominal level and accept the averting of opponent's position on the ultimate level, there is no abuse of refutation logic by the Mādhyamika. This is inappropriate in all contexts. Thus as for the remainder of the refutations cited earlier one should understand these on the basis of the position just explained.

From the line “**Not originating from itself,**” up to the line “**The yogi shall swiftly attain freedom,**” these lines have elucidated the selflessness of phenomena. From the line “**That all faults such as afflictions come from egoistic view**” and so on up to this point [in Candrakīrti's root text] the selflessness of person has been elucidated.

The Sixth Ground VII Enumerations of Emptiness

(3) The subdivisions of emptiness, the established conclusion

This has two parts:

- (a) Summary presentation of the division of emptiness
- (b) Extensive explanation of the meaning of the individual divisions

The first, with wish to present the subdivisions of emptiness, the text reads:

**This no-self is taught for the sake of freeing the beings
In terms of twofold due to division into phenomena and persons;
These the Buddha taught once again in a manifold way
For the spiritual trainees by way of subdivisions.**

**Having explained emptiness with elaboration
In terms of sixteen to summarise these
Once again it's taught to be fourfold;
These are accepted to be the great vehicle as well.**

This no-self of no intrinsic existence of phenomena has been taught by the Blessed One in terms of the twofold division of selflessness of person and selflessness of phenomena. The manner in which it is divided in these two terms is not on the basis of differentiating between two [notions of] selfhood, that which does not exist, on the [two] bases, namely the person and phenomena. This is because intrinsic existence is the self that is supposed to be nonexistent. Therefore it is from the point of view of the basis, namely the phenomena such as the aggregates and the person, that [the two selflessness] are differentiated. For what purpose these two taught? The selflessness of person was taught for the sake of beings such as the Disciples and Self-Enlightened Ones to attain total freedom from the cycle of existence; while for the sake of the bodhisattva beings attaining total freedom [420] through attaining omniscience both selflessness were taught.

As explained earlier, although there exists in the Disciples and Self-Enlightened Ones the realization of the suchness of seeing the dependent origination of mere conditions, they do not have, as mentioned earlier, a comprehensive realization of selflessness of phenomena in terms of its varieties [of reasoning] and [length of] time. Nevertheless they do possess means adequate enough to abandon the seeds of the afflictions of the three realms of existence. So it has been posited that they also possess full meditative practice of selflessness of person without remainder in terms of no intrinsic existence of person. Though they do not generate the wisdom of countless varieties of reasoning negating true

existence of person they do possess complete practice of the antidote to abandon the seeds of afflictions. They, however, do not have complete practice of the antidote to abandon the obscurations to knowledge.

These two selflessnesses were taught by the Blessed One, once again, in relation to the diverse mentalities of the spiritual trainees by means of varieties of elaboration. How is this so? [For example] in the *Mother of the Conquerors [Sutras]*, having taught sixteenfold division of emptiness, once again it was explained in terms of a fourfold summary and these were understood, that is explained, to be the great vehicle. Thus there is the condensed twofold division, the fourfold mid-division, and the sixteen-fold elaborate division. For instance, it is stated:

Subhuti, again the great vehicle of the bodhisattvas is this: Emptiness of within, emptiness of without, emptiness of both within and without, emptiness of emptiness, emptiness of the vast, emptiness of the ultimate truth, emptiness of the conditioned, emptiness of the unconditioned, emptiness of the transcendence of extremes, emptiness of that is without beginning or end, [421] emptiness of no-discarded, emptiness of intrinsic nature, emptiness of all phenomena, emptiness of individual defining characteristics, emptiness of the nonobjectified, and the emptiness of the essence that is non-entity.⁵⁸⁷

Thus having presented the sixteen emptiness, it states:

Subhuti, furthermore entity is devoid of entity, non-entity is devoid of non-entity, the nature is devoid of nature, and other-derived is devoid of other-derived.⁵⁸⁸

These emptiness are called the great vehicle. Whether it is emptiness or non-emptiness, there is none that has the slightest degree of intrinsic existence. The existence of the taming [of aspirants] through these individual aspects of emptiness is bound to be termed on the conventional level alone. *Fundamental Wisdom* states:

If there is the minutest non-empty,
There will also the minutest that is empty;
So say not “It’s empty,”
Nor say “It’s not empty;”
Say not “It’s both or either;”
Speak in terms of designation.⁵⁸⁹

The meaning of the preceding [five] lines is that one must not speak in terms of the position of inherent existence while that of the last line is that one should express the reference of the designations to be existent on the conventional level.

(b) Extensive explanation of the meaning of the individual divisions

⁵⁸⁷ 25 *Thousands?* Kangyur, shes phyin, *

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid., p.*

⁵⁸⁹ MMK, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

This has two parts:

- (i) Extensive explanation of the sixteenfold division of emptiness
- (ii) Extensive explanation of the fourfold division of emptiness

The first has four parts:

- 1' Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of within
- 2' Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of the vast
- 3' Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of that is the transcendence of extremes
- 4' Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of all phenomena [422]

The first has two parts:

- a' Explaining emptiness of within
- b' Explaining the three remaining emptiness

The first has two parts:

- i' The actual point
- ii' Showing, as an aside, the way in which intrinsic nature is accepted

The first is as follows.

**Because it is its own nature
The eyes are devoid of eyes;
Likewise term as well the ears,
Nose, tongue, body and mind too.**

**Because they do not endure eternally,
Because they do not disintegrate,
The emptiness of six [senses] such as eyes,
These are held to be emptiness of within.**

That which is the absence of intrinsic existence of six inner phenomena, such as the eyes, is held to be inner emptiness. Here, the eyes are devoid of inherently existing eyes for the nature of the eyes is the emptiness of its own inherent existence. Just as explained with respect to the eyes, likewise this should be applied to the ears, nose, tongue, body and the mind. The reason why they are thus empty is because they do not ultimately endure eternally and do not [similarly] disintegrate.

Here, Patsap translates [the commentary] in the following way:

Not enduring eternally should be understood as referring to not losing its nature.
This is because they do not come to disintegrate through enduring for a little

while [first] and then ceasing. So it has been taught. This indicates the following:
An entity that is endowed with intrinsic nature must without doubt will have to
turn into something that is not eternal unceasing.⁵⁹⁰

This is an erroneous translation. For in that case the reversal of the predicate will have to
be pervaded by the reasoning sign.⁵⁹¹ Therefore this is better as translated in Naktsō's
version as the following:

Any entity that exists by virtue of its own essence will become either something
that endures eternally or something that do not subject to impairment.⁵⁹²

Thus it is clear that the first [translation] made an error in its use of the negation term.
Explanation of the Commentary, citing the lines “As they do not endure eternally/ And as
they do not disintegrate/,” expounds in the following:

If eyes and so forth possess intrinsic nature, [423] given that intrinsic nature does
not possess manifestations and disintegration, these [eyes and so forth] too will
come to lack manifestations and disintegration. Since they do not possess these
they are thus devoid of intrinsic existence.⁵⁹³

This too is incorrect for, if it is, one will have to read this as “because they will have no
disintegration yet they do possess disintegration.” This, however, contradicts the
statement in the sūtra “Because it has no disintegration.” “Not enduring eternally” too
should be understood as translated in Naktsō's version as “eternal is applied to that which
is not subject to impairment.”

Thus when permanence in the form of enduring eternally is negated, it might occur that
eyes and so forth truly disintegrates through enduring briefly in its temporal stage [first]
and then coming to cease. To negate this the line “Because they have no disintegration”
has been stated. In brief, the meaning here is that because [eyes and so on] do not exist
truly in any manner either as permanent or impermanent. In *Light of Twenty Thousand
Lines*, this [point] is explained in another manner as well.⁵⁹⁴

As for the intrinsic nature of phenomena, this is as stated in the following in *Fundamental
Wisdom*:

Emergence of intrinsic nature
From cause and conditions is illogical;
If it emerge from cause and conditions
This intrinsic nature will then be a product.

How can it be logical to assert

⁵⁹⁰ MABh, p.* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁹¹ Unpack this statement in the note.*

⁵⁹² See Naktsō's translation.

⁵⁹³ 'grel bshad, *

⁵⁹⁴ nyi khri snang ba, * Tengyur, *

“Intrinsic nature is produced?”
Intrinsic nature is not uncontrived,
And it is not contingent upon others.⁵⁹⁵

ii’ Showing, as an aside, the way in which intrinsic nature is accepted

[Question:] “Now listen, is there an intrinsic nature that exists that is accepted by master [Nḡrjuna], such as applied in the qualification ‘an intrinsic nature unarisen from cause and conditions’ by the master in his treatise?”

[Response:] The ultimate reality that is understood in the context where the Blessed One states “Whether the Thatḡgatas appear [in the world] or not, as for the ultimate reality [424] of phenomena, this always abide” do exist. What is this so-called ultimate reality? It is the intrinsic nature of these phenomena such as the eyes. What is their intrinsic nature? It is [the nature] of these eyes and so on that is uncontrived and not contingent upon other factors of production, which is the reality that is realized by an cognition that is free of the cataracts of ignorance.⁵⁹⁶

These lines effectively refute those who assert that this master [Candrakīrti] does not accept the existence of ultimate truth and ultimate reality and that when ignorance’s contamination ceases no cognition exists at all.

Now does this ultimate reality exist? Who would say that it does not exist? If it does not exist for what purpose the bodhisattvas practice the path of the perfections? They would not do so. If the ultimate truth does not exist there will no attaining of culmination of its realization; and if this does not exist the practice of the path will be pointless. So why do the bodhisattvas initiate hundredfold efforts in order realize ultimate reality and attain its culmination?⁵⁹⁷ This [paragraph] indicates that to initiate a multitude of efforts on one’s path while asserting that the ultimate truth called “ultimate reality” is not an object of any cognition constitutes an extreme dullness of mental faculty. That this is so is stated so clearly in the following in the *Cloud of Jewels*:

Child of the lineage, the ultimate has no arising, no cessation, no disintegration, no coming, no going, it is not expressible in words, it is not thoroughly definable in words, it is not cognized through conceptual elaboration. Child of the lineage, the ultimate is ineffable, it is tranquil and is to be cognized [425] individually by the Noble Ones. Child of the lineage, the ultimate is such that whether the Thatḡgatas appear [in the world] or not, for its sake the bodhisattvas shave their head and beard, clad in saffron clothes, through their perfect trust renounce household to the homeless, and following their renunciation, in order to attain this ultimate reality, they abide without any loss [of this reality] by applying

⁵⁹⁵ MMK, 15:* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁹⁶ MABh, p.* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁵⁹⁷ Up to this point in the paragraph represents a close paraphrase from Candrakīrti’s autocommentary.

perseverance as if their hair and clothes are on fire. Child of the lineage, if the ultimate does not exist engaging in pure conduct [of celibacy] will become pointless and the emergence of the Tathāgatas too will become pointless. In that the ultimate does exist the bodhisattvas are called those learned in the ultimate.⁵⁹⁸

The meaning of “being ineffable” and “not being cognizable by conceptual elaborations” is that [it] cannot be the object of language and conceptual thought in the manner in which the ultimate is perceived by the nonconceptual gnosis. The meaning is not that it cannot be realized [through language and thought] in general

Given that objections have been leveled against the ultimate being not existent and even when [the consequence] projecting its opposite was shown [the ultimate] has been stated to be existent, and it is once again presented as being existent, to distinguish between non-existent and not being existent is to merely demonstrate a very inferior intelligence.

In numerous instances of Patsap’s translation, although it reads “whether [the Tathāgatas appear [in the world] or not, for its sake,” in Naktsō’s translation where it reads “Whether [Tathāgatas] appear or not the ultimate remains never impaired.” This [latter reading] accords well with the sutra cited earlier “Whether [the Tathāgatas] appear or not this ultimate reality always abides” so it is better. [426]

[Objection:] Some may object. “Alas! You do not accept even the slightest entity of intrinsic existence yet accept an intrinsic nature that is not adventitiously contrived and is contingent upon others; this is an assertion of mutually contradictory meaning.”

[Response:] This is because of your failure to understand the intention of the *Treatise on the Middle Way*. The intention of this [work] is this. If the very nature of eyes and so forth that is dependently originated, which is apprehendable by the childish person, is itself the intrinsic nature and their mode of being, given that this nature is cognized directly by a distorted cognition, engaging in pure conduct will become pointless. However, since the eyes and so forth being dependently originated is not their intrinsic nature and mode of being, engaging in pure conduct for the sake of viewing that [mode of being] becomes endowed with purpose. So states [Candrakīrti].⁵⁹⁹

Thus the negation of intrinsic nature is the negation of eyes and so forth as being their own essential nature while acceptance of intrinsic nature pertains to the acceptance this negation as being the intrinsic nature that is called the ultimate reality of eyes and so on. So there is not the slightest contradiction in the rejection of intrinsic existence of entities while accepting an intrinsic nature that is the ultimate reality of the entities. Such an ultimate reality is spoken of by me [Candrakīrti] within the framework of conventional truth, namely existence on the mere nominal level, as uncontrived and as noncontingent upon others. The ultimate reality that is not cognizable by the childish beings is suitable

⁵⁹⁸ *Ratnamega*, Kangyur, *

⁵⁹⁹ This response as well as the objection are both adapted from Candrakīrti’s autocommentary with few additions of clarifying words here and there. MABh, p.* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

to be an intrinsic nature and its acceptance as existent merely on the conventional level does not entail that it exists intrinsically as an entity or a nonentity on the ultimate level. This is because it is the pacification of intrinsic existence itself. [427] Not only that this intrinsic nature that is the ultimate reality is accepted by master [Nḡṛjuna] others too can be lead to the acceptance of this [ultimate reality]. Therefore this intrinsic nature is presented as established for both oneself and the opponent at the end of an argumentation process.⁶⁰⁰

This statement needs to be especially ascertained. If asserts in the manner of those who assert heat and so forth as being the intrinsic nature and ultimate mode of being of fire and so forth, this [intrinsic nature] becomes totally untenable. Because heat and so forth are dependently arisen, they are contrivances alone; because they exist on the basis of arising in dependence upon causes and conditions eyes and so on here one cannot assert through this that they are devoid of contrivance and they possess noncontingence upon other causes and conditions. The phrase “they are” indicates that there exist no entities that can be apprehended as supreme and shows the meaning of such manifestations on the conventional level. This is how it appears in Patsap’s translation.⁶⁰¹ In Naktso’s translation, however, this reads as “Here, there is no such apprehension of [things] as being supreme and on the conventional level facts are established as they are.” So the reading “Here, there is no such ...” seems better; while the meaning of the remaining part [of the passage] is this: That there exist no entities that are the apprehended object of clinging to true existence and, on the conventional level, their meaning as contrivance and contingent upon others is shown.

On the basis this presentation [by Candrakīrti] on how master Noble [Nḡṛjuna] accepts intrinsic nature one should also understand the following in *Hymns to the Ultimate Expanse* where it states that the sutras that teach emptiness demolish the objectified focus of the affliction of grasping at true existence and that it does not undermine the emptiness, that is it does not indicate its nonexistence, emptiness which is the negation of such objectified focus, namely the sphere of the Thatḡta:

Sutras that teach emptiness
All of which were taught by the Conqueror,
They all avert the afflictions;
They do not undermine this sphere.⁶⁰²

Here the statement that the eyes and so forth are devoid of eyes and so forth elucidates the emptiness of the eyes and so forth being devoid of intrinsic existence. This is not the same as the assertion of the Disciple School where the eyes and so forth are stated to be empty in that they are devoid of a self that is the inner agent; nor is it the same as the Mind Only school’s statement “The eyes are devoid only of subject-object substance

⁶⁰⁰ This entire paragraph represents a paraphrase from Candrakīrti’s autocommentary with very few additional clarifying words here and there. MABh, p.* Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁶⁰¹ This is a reference Patsap’s translation of this section of Candrakīrti’s autocommentary.

⁶⁰² *Chos dbying bstod pa*, * Tengyur, *

duality” whereby they assert the emptiness not in terms of no intrinsic existence of eyes and so forth but in terms of one not existing in another.

b’ Explaining the three remaining emptiness

This is as follows.

**Because it is their own nature,
Form is devoid of form;
Sound, smell, taste and tactility,
Mental objects too are likewise.**

**This no intrinsic existence of form and so on,
This held to be emptiness of without;
No intrinsic existence of both,
This is the emptiness of within and without.**

**The no intrinsic existence of phenomena,
This the wise has termed “emptiness;”
This emptiness too is maintained
To be devoid of the essence of emptiness.**

**The emptiness of what is called emptiness,
This is called emptiness of emptiness;
This has been taught to help avert the grasping
Of those with the mind [holding] emptiness to be real.**

The no intrinsic existence of six outer objects, such as form and so on, that are not within [a person’s] continuum, in terms of being devoid of intrinsic existence, this is held to be outer emptiness. The outer form is devoid of existing by virtue of form’s essence for this is the nature of that form. One should also understand how sound, smell, taste, tactility and mental objects too are empty in the same way as well. Both here [in this section of the three remaining of the first set of four] as well as the remaining [divisions of emptiness], the statement “that they do not endure eternally and that they do not disintegrate” should be understood as explained earlier in the context of emptiness of within.

The physical base of the sense organ, for example, is encompassed within a person’s mental continuum yet it is not encompassed within the senses, it is both within and without. The no intrinsic existence of it being not existent by virtue of its own essence is the emptiness of within and without. The remaining [part of the stanza] is the same as before. This no intrinsic existence of inner and outer phenomena is termed “emptiness” by those who are wise in suchness. That emptiness of the intrinsic existence of inner and outer phenomena in turn is maintained to be devoid of [429] existing by virtue of an essence or of true existence. In that case, the emptiness where emptiness is the basis being emptied, this is held to be the emptiness of emptiness. The teaching of emptiness being devoid of true existence has been taught in the *Mother of Conquerors [sutras]* to

help avert the grasping at true existence by those with the mind that apprehend the emptiness to be a real entity, that is as true existence. That this is so is clearly stated in the following in *Hymns to the World Transcendent*:

To help dispel all conceptualizations,
If the ambrosia of emptiness is revealed,
He who clings to that,
This you have utterly condemned.⁶⁰³

These [lines] indicate how the Conqueror utterly condemned both the following two assertions – one where some, while taking the ultimate truth to be the mere elimination of real entities, asserts it to be true existence and others who, while taking something that is not a mere elimination but an affirmatively characterized [phenomenon] autonomous entity resembling blue or yellow [color] as the ultimate reality, and asserts it to be true existence.

2' Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of the vast

This is as follows.

**The container world of the sentient beings,
As it pervades everywhere with no exception,
Through countless examples it has no edges
Or limits, the directions are “vast.”**

**So the emptiness of these directions
Of all ten [such directions],
These are emptiness of the vast;
This was taught to avert grasping at the vast.**

**As it is the supreme purpose,
It's the ultimate transcendence of nirva[°]a;
This is devoid of itself;
This is the emptiness of ultimate truth.**

**To avert the grasping
Of those who hold nirva[°]a to be real,
He who knows the ultimate
Revealed the emptiness of the ultimate.**

**Because they derive from conditions
The three realms are definitely termed the conditioned;
This is devoid of itself;
Was taught to be emptiness of the conditioned.**

⁶⁰³ * Tengyur, *

**That which has no arising, enduring, as well
The impermanence itself, this is the unconditioned;
This devoid of itself,
This is the emptiness of the unconditioned.**

Since apart from the four directions, such as east, no container and the contained worlds exist, the world of sentient beings and world of container pervades [everywhere] without exception. And when cultivating the four immeasurables, such as loving kindness, one meditates these with respect to all sentient beings pervaded in space, from the point of view their objective focuses they are characterized as “immeasurable.” So just as they are immeasurable through the analogy of the directions being immeasurable, with respect to cultivation these [immeasurables] too they are characterized as without boundary or measure. So the ten directions are vast only. The emptiness that is the absence of inherent existence of all these ten directions, such as east, is the emptiness of the vast. This was taught for the sake of averting grasping at directions as vast with intrinsic existence. [230] Distortedly apprehending the directions is, for example, like the non-Buddhist Vaiṣṇavika who hold the directions to be of permanent substance.

The term “truth” (*don*) in the context of “ultimate truth” (*don dam*) can refer to purpose as in the statement “There is a meaning in this,” and to object of knowledge as in the expression “Five categories [of knowledge].” Of these two, here it refers to nirvāṇa, that is the Buddha’s truth body. For nirvāṇa is the supreme purpose that is the object of attainment. That emptiness, which is the absence of this truth body existing by virtue of its own essence, is the emptiness of the ultimate. This too, the emptiness of the ultimate was taught by the Buddha, knower of the ultimate, in order to help avert the grasping at true existence of those who apprehend the truth body nirvāṇa to be a real entity, that is as being a true existence.

Because they have originated or arisen from causes and conditions, the three realms are definitely termed as being conditioned. The emptiness that is the absence of intrinsic existence of the three realms is taught to be the emptiness of the conditioned. Phenomena that is other than or lacks arising, impermanence – that is cessation or disintegration – and enduring, they are the unconditioned. The emptiness that is the absence of intrinsic existence of these is taught to be the emptiness of the unconditioned.

3’ Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of the transcendence of extremes

This is as follows.

**That which has no extremes
This is called the “transcendence of extremes;”
This is devoid of itself;
This is termed emptiness of limit-transcendent.**

**Beginning, first, and the end limit,
As cyclic existence has none of these,**

**It's called without beginning and end;
As it is devoid of coming and going,**

**This dream-like existence is devoid of itself,
This has been definitely termed
In the treatise as the emptiness
Of without beginning or end.**

**“Discarding” is certainly applied
To diffraction and rejection;
That non-discarded is not let gone;
So that which is not discarded,**

**Since the emptiness of this itself
That is no-discarding is the no-discarding,
So this is called
The emptiness of no-discarding.**

**Since the essence of things
Such as the conditioned were not created
By the Disciple, the Self-Enlightened,
The bodhisattvas and the That-gatas,**

**Therefore the essence of the conditioned
And so on is termed “intrinsic nature;”
And the emptiness of this itself,
This is the emptiness of intrinsic nature.**

“Extreme” refers to eternalism or nihilism holding of which leads to falling into an abyss of erroneous [way]. It does not refer to such things as holding the unconditioned to be permanent and the annihilation of the continuity of birth and death through karma for the Arhats. Therefore one should differentiate between eternality and annihilation, the holding of which leads to falling into an adverse abyss [on the one hand] and mere permanence and annihilation [in general].

The basis that lacks the extremes of eternalism and nihilism, the holding of which leads to falling into a grasping at an extreme, this is referred to as “the transcendence of extremes.” [431] This absence of extreme is devoid of intrinsic existence, which is termed the emptiness of the transcendence of extremes. This was, as stated in the *King of Meditations*, “Having abandoned the two extremes of existence and nonexistence, of clean and unclean, one must not abide in the middle as well,”⁶⁰⁴ taught in order to help avert grasping at true existence that conceives “this middle that is the absence of extremes may be true existence.” This is like, for instance, the Mind Only school’s assertion of the mind, which is middle that is the absence of extremes in accordance with their own system, as being true existence.

⁶⁰⁴ * Kangyur, *

In that the cycle of existence lacks the end limits, such as the beginning or the first in terms of such statements as “It did not occurred before this, but came into being from this point,” and the end as in the statement “It will not occur from this point onwards.” So the cycle of existence is expressed as having no beginning or end. Since it is devoid of intrinsic going and coming, this dream-like existence is devoid of intrinsic existence. This has been most certainly termed in the great treatise, the *Mother of Conquerors*, as the emptiness of that which is without beginning or end. “Discarding” is applied certainly to diffraction or rejection and the absence of that discarding refers to not casting it away to the other side, that is its reality is never to be discarded. This is the Great Vehicle which it is inappropriate to discard. The no-discarding is devoid of intrinsic existence as no-discarding and this emptiness is referred to as the emptiness of no-discarding. For this emptiness is the nature of that no-discarding. The nature or the ultimate reality of the conditioned and so on is termed intrinsic nature. This is because the nature or the ultimate reality of the conditioned and so on is not created by the Disciples, by the Self-Enlightened Ones, [432] by the bodhisattvas, the Conqueror’s children, and by the That-gatas; [they only] elucidate it [but] it abides primordially as their essential nature. The emptiness that is such intrinsic nature being devoid of intrinsic existence is the emptiness of intrinsic nature.

Now, is not this point expressed in the context of emptiness of emptiness? Though this is true, in the former instance [it was taught] in order to help dispel the thought that the emptiness of inner and outer phenomena might be true existence since it is established by the rational cognition cognizing suchness. Here, however, this [emptiness] is taught to help dispel the thought that if it is an essential nature that is not created by anyone it might be true existence. So this is not a repetition. If one understands how although both of these two grounds for doubt exists with respect to the ultimate reality there is no contradiction in the fact that it [ultimate reality] can be negated as being a true existence, all misunderstandings pertaining to holding the ultimate truth to be not cognizable by any awareness will be averted.

4’ Explaining the set of four such as emptiness of all phenomena

This has three parts:

- a’ Explaining the emptiness all phenomena
- b’ Explaining the emptiness of unique defining characteristics
- c’ Explaining the emptiness of the unobjectifiable and the identity of non-entity

The first is as follows.

**The eighteen elements as six contacts,
And the six feelings that derive from these,
Likewise that which are material and non-material,
All phenomena, both conditioned and unconditioned,**

**All of these phenomena, the emptiness that is the absence
Of their own natures [is emptiness of all phenomena].**

All phenomena refer to the eighteen elements – the six elements of the supporting sense faculties, such as the eyes and so on, the six elements of the support consciousness, such as eye consciousness, and the six elements of the perceived objects, such as form – the six contacts, that is from the contact through convergence with respect to the eyes up to the contact through convergence with respect to the mind, the six feelings that derive from these six contacts, the two matter and non-matter, and likewise the conditioned and unconditioned phenomena. The emptiness that is the absence of inherent existence of all these phenomena [433] is the emptiness of all phenomena.

b’ Explaining the emptiness of self-defining characteristics

This has three parts:

- i’ Brief presentation
- ii’ Extensive explanation
- iii’ Summary of the points

The first is as follows.

**The absence of entity such as being suitable as a form,
This is the emptiness of self-defining characteristics.**

The defining characteristic of the aggregate of form is that which is suitable to take form, and “so on” include all phenomena up to omniscience. So the emptiness that is the absence of the entity of self-defining characteristics or inherent existence of all such phenomena of [both] unenlightened and enlightened class, that is the emptiness of self-defining characteristics.

ii’ Extensive explanation

This has three parts:

- 1” The defining characteristics of the factors of the ground
- 2” The defining characteristics of the factors of the path
- 3” The defining characteristics of the factors of the result

The first is as follows.

**Form is characterized by being suitable as a form;
Feeling has the nature of an experience;
Recognition apprehends the signs;
Volitional factors manifestly compose;**

**That which individually cognizes the objects
Is the defining mark of consciousness.
Suffering is aggregates' own characteristic;
The element's nature is [likened to] venomous poison.**

**The sense bases were taught [by the Buddha]
To being the avenues for birth;
That which is dependently originated,
That is characterized by convergence and meeting.**

Again, what are the individual defining characteristics of form and so on? The form is characterized by being able to assume form. For example, a sutra states:

Monks, because they exist as forms and are suitable of taking on forms, they are called “the appropriated aggregate of form.”⁶⁰⁵

There is no necessary entailment that these defining characteristics are the referent identities [i.e. definiens]; they express the principal [features] that illustrate their individual natures.

Feeling has the nature of the experience of joy, pain or neutrality; recognition apprehends the specific characteristics [of the object], such as the external signs like blue and yellow [colors] and the inner signs like joy, pain and so on. “Signs” refer to specifications of the object; volitional forces manifestly construct the conditioned [phenomena] and is other than the four aggregates. That which cognizes the individual aspects of objects, such as form, sound and so on, this is the defining characteristic of consciousness. The defining characteristics of aggregate is suffering, while the nature or the defining characteristics of elements is to sustain cyclic existence just like the venomous snake that seizes others and bring harm to them. As for the sense-fields, [434] the Buddha taught that they are the doors of birth through which sufferings emerge. These three are understood with respect to the aggregates, elements and sense-fields within the cycle of existence. The defining characteristic of that which is dependently originated is that which is differentiated on the basis of the coming together of causes and conditions.

2” The defining characteristics of the factors of the path

This is as follows.

**To give away is the perfection of giving;
Absence of torment characterizes ethical discipline;
Absence of hostility characterizes forbearance;
Perseverance is the absence of the reprehensible;**

**Concentration is defined by assimilation;
Wisdom is characterized by no attachment;**

⁶⁰⁵ * Kangyur, * See if this is in MABh, *

**These then are the defining characteristics
Of the six perfections.**

**The concentrations and the immeasurables,
Likewise the formless as well,
He who perfectly knows these, because of this
He is characterized as the unperturbed.**

**That which has the character of definitely bring forth
The thirty seven factors that contribute
To enlightenment, the characteristics of emptiness
Since it's unobjectifiable it is utterly absent.**

**The signlessness is peace itself;
The characteristics of the third [door]
Is absence of suffering and delusion; the liberation factors (*rnam thar*)
Are characterized by leading to utter freedom.**

The defining characteristic of the perfection of giving is to contemplate giving away entirely one's body, material resources and the roots of virtue. The defining characteristic of ethical discipline is to attain the cooling or the absence of the afflictions' torment. The defining characteristic of forbearance is the absence of hostility, that is the ability [to maintain] mind's tolerance. The defining characteristic of perseverance is be joyful in upholding the virtues that are free of reprehensible [characters]. The defining characteristic of concentration is that which is characterized by abiding with single pointed mind upon a virtuous object of focus with the aim of bringing a convergence of all virtuous factors. The defining characteristic of wisdom is the absence of attachment; that is, with the aim of traversing to the transcendence of nirva^a, one is devoid of or negates attachment or clinging to true existence of any phenomena. Thus the defining characteristics of the six perfections are, I say, as described in the above.

The four concentrations, such as the first level of concentration, and the four immeasurables, such as immeasurable loving kindness, these the Buddha, the knower of perfect truth, are described as being characterized by unperturbances, that is absence of hostility. For these are attained through the abandonment of hostility. The defining characteristics of the thirty-seven factors contributing to enlightenment is that which brings about definite deliverance to liberation, which is the site of deliverance. [435] The defining characteristic of the liberation door of emptiness is that which is characterized by thorough absence because it is not soiled by the stain of the conceptualizations of the **objectified focus** of grasping at true existence. The liberation door of signlessness is characterized by tranquility [attained] through nonobjectification of the signs. The defining characteristic of the third liberation door, which is the liberation door of wishlessness, is that which is characterized by absence of suffering and delusion. This is because [through it] one correctly views those [phenomena] that have the nature of suffering as suffering and, when viewing the mode of being of the volitional forces with the wisdom realizing suchness, one does not aspire for the excellences of cyclic existence

and also one does not possess aspiration for the supramundane state on the basis of holding to be true existence. The defining characteristic of the eight liberation factors is that which is characterized by bringing about total release from the obscuration pertaining to the absorptions.

Of the eight liberation factors, the first two – watching the external forms while not dismantling within the perception of [oneself] possessing a form and watching external forms while dismantling within that perception – are antidotes to the obscuration that impedes creating emanations. In many copies of the commentary, with respect to the second it reads “having the perception of form within,” this is an error. The liberation factor pertaining to attractive [forms] as characterized by the fourth level of concentration is the third [liberation factor]. This serves as an antidote to the affliction of having liking for creating attractive forms and dislike for creating unattractive forms. Within the path that [brings] abiding in the bliss in this very life, there are two kinds: With respect to the path abiding in concordance to liberation, there are the four liberation factor that are the absorptions of formless realm; and with respect to the path abiding in tranquility there is the one liberation factor, which is absorption of cessation whereby recognitions and sensations are being ceased. [436]

3” The defining characteristics of the factors of the result

This is as follows.

**The powers are described as characterized
By utterly direct establishment;
The fearlessnesses of the Savior
Are of the nature of total resoluteness;**

**The perfect knowledge of individual factors
Are characterized by limitless courage and so on;
That which brings about benefit to beings,
This is called the great loving kindness.**

**That which protects those with suffering,
This is great compassion; sympathetic joy
Is characterized by utter joy, while equanimity
Is called characterized by the unfamiliar.**

**The qualities of the Buddha unentangled,
Which are accepted to be ten and eight,
He who displays them are never vanquished;
So unvanquishable is their defining characteristic.**

**The gnosis that is the knowledge of all aspects
Is held to be characterized by direct perception;
Since others are only partial
They are not held to be direct perception.**

The ten powers which shall be explained in the following should be perceived as possessing the characteristic or nature of utterly direct establishment. In that they establish the objects with utter directness they are characterized by absence of obstruction with regard to the objects; they are therefore called “powers.” With respect to the four pronouncements – (1) such as the pronouncement “I am perfectly, that is without distortion, fully awakened with regard to all objects of knowledge without exception, that is I have realized these within,” (2) “I have brought to an end all stains together with their impressions,” (3) “I say that attachment and so on are factors that obstruct liberation,” and (4) “If one endeavors in these levels and paths suffering to come to an end,” - no one capable of disputing these in accordance with the correct rules [of argument] with the statement “These are not true” is found. So these four fearlessnesses of the savior have the nature or characteristic of total resoluteness. For no disputant can turn these otherwise. The **four perfect knowledge of the individual characteristics** of teaching, its meaning, etymologies and courage are characterized by the absence of the cessation or exhaustion of these four, such as courage. That which clearly brings about of benefits and happiness to the beings is the defining characteristic of what is called “great loving kindness;” thoroughly protecting suffering sentient beings is the defining characteristic of great compassion; great sympathetic joy is characterized by most excellent or supreme joyfulness; while great equanimity should not understood as characterized by being unentangled with or being free of being attached to some while being angry towards others.

The qualities of the Buddha, which are held to be ten and eight, these are characterized by not subject to being defeated by others. [437] The reason for this is that because the Teacher does not possess the opposite of the unentangled, such as being confused, he is not open to assailment from these; so he cannot be defeated or outdone by others.

The eighteen unshared [qualities] are in the following three sets of six: (1) That his body does not possess error, (2) his speech senseless chatter, (3) his mind forgetfulness, (4) or lapse of meditative equipoise, (5) or conceptualization apprending cyclic existence and its transcendence to be different, and (5) an indifference of failing to discriminate [the phenomena] individually – this is the first set. Not possessing (1) impaired aspiration, (2) impaired perseverance, (3) impaired mindfulness, (4) impaired meditative absorption, (5) impaired wisdom and (6) impaired freedom – this is the second set of six. With respect to the deeds of (1) body, (2) speech, and (3) mind, these are [always] preceded by gnosis and follow after the gnosis, and with respect to the temporal stages of (4) past, (5) future, and (6) present, the vision of the gnosis that is unattached and unimpeded come to engage – this is the third set. The etymology of the term “unshared” is that these qualities are present only in the Buddha and not in other bases thus the bases [of these qualities] remain unshared. As for the explanation of these [qualities] one should learn them from the citation from *Questions of gZung kyī dbang phyug* in the autocommentary.⁶⁰⁶

The gnosis that knows all aspects [of phenomena] is accepted as characterized by direct knowing of all phenomena. All [instances of] awareness other than this omniscience, as

⁶⁰⁶ MABh, * Kangyur, *

they engage only with partial [isolated] objects, they are not accepted as the direct knowledge of all the objects of knowledge. Thus these defining characteristics of form up to omniscience, they are the individual natures that merely illustrate them, there is a world of difference between [these defining characteristics and self-defining characteristic, which is the object of negation.

iii' Summary of the points

This is as follows. [438]

**That which are characterized as conditioned,
And that which are characterized as unconditioned,
They are devoid of their own selves,
This is the emptiness of defining characteristics.**

That which are the defining characteristics of conditioned phenomena and that which are the characteristics that define the unconditioned phenomena, the emptiness that is the absence of their intrinsic existence is the emptiness of unique defining characteristics.

c' Explaining the emptiness of the unobjectifiable and the identity of non-entity

This is as follows.

**This present does not endure;
Past and future do not exist;
That which is unobjectified in such terms,
This is called "the unobjectifiable."**

**That which is unobjectified
Is devoid of its own nature;
It does not endure eternally nor does it
Disintegrate, it is the emptiness of unobjectified.**

**Because they originate from conditions
Things do not possess essence of inherence;
The inherence being devoid of itself,
This is the emptiness of non-entity.**

What has occurred in the present does not endure beyond the temporal stage of its own existence, that which had already occurred, namely the past, is the destruction of that which has occurred; as for the yet to occur, the future, this that which will occur, this is unarisen. So [things] do not exist in any of these three [temporal stages]. That which had already occurred, which is to occur, and the present, in their respective order, cannot be perceived in any of the temporal stages – at the time of destruction, at the time of unarisen, and beyond the time of one's existence. This is called the unobjectifiable. The absence of this unobjectifiable of its own inherent existence, because they do not endure

eternally nor do they disintegrate, this is the emptiness of “the unobjectifiable.” Since they originate from cause and conditions things lack intrinsic existence of the nature of coming together, that is origination through coming together of cause and conditions. These are called “non-entity” and emptiness of inherent existence of those that have originated through coming together is the emptiness of the essence of non-entity.

Thus the exposition of emptiness in terms of sixteenfold [division] is not due to different avenues of reasoning to negate true existence. For it establishes [emptiness] with respect to all through the reasoning of not enduring eternally and lacking disintegration. It is also not the case that [through these] the absence of true existence is being established for a single person in general. Because when one has ascertained absence of true existence through valid cognition with respect to a basis, phenomena such as the eyes, when one’s mind is directed upon other bases, without depending upon someone stating a proof one will be able to eliminate the doubts by oneself on the basis of a reasoning. [439] Therefore one should understand that [this teachings on sixteen emptiness] is [taught] both from the perspective of a single person and from the perspective specific individuals in whom the clinging to true existence of specific bases [of emptiness].

(ii) Extensive explanation of the fourfold division of emptiness

This is as follows.

**The term “entity” when condensed
It expresses the five aggregates;
These being devoid of their own selves,
This is described as the emptiness of entity.**

**In brief, “non-entity” is applied
To phenomena that are unconditioned;
These non-entity are devoid of their own selves,
This is the emptiness of non-entity.**

**The absence of essence of intrinsic nature
Is called the emptiness of “intrinsic nature;”
Since intrinsic nature is uncreated,
It’s termed as “intrinsic nature.”**

**Whether the Buddhas emerge [in the world],
Or whether they do not emerge,
In actual fact the emptiness of all things
Is proclaimed to be an other entity.**

**“Reality limit,” and “suchness,”
These are emptiness of other entities;
In the ways of perfection of wisdom
These were proclaimed in this manner.**

The term “entity” in the context of “emptiness of entity” expresses the five aggregates; these are expressed in a condensed manner without specifying them. The emptiness that is the absence of intrinsic existence of these five aggregates, this is described in the sutras as the emptiness of entity. If one were to condense without specifying them, “non-entity” refers to unconditioned space and so on and the nirva^a. The emptiness that is the absence of intrinsic existence of this very unconditioned is called the emptiness of non-entity. “Intrinsic nature” refers to the nature of the ultimate reality and this nature is not created by the Disciples and so on but abides as the essential nature of things. That this nature that is the ultimate reality is devoid of intrinsic existence is given the name the emptiness of intrinsic nature. Whether the Buddhas appear, that is in the world, or whether they do not appear, as for emptiness that is the nature of all things, this is proclaimed as other entity or other nature. Here in Naktsō’s translation the following is found, which reads better: “Whether they do not appear, as for the nature/ ... It’s proclaimed to be the empty other nature.”

The Sanskrit term for “other entity” [which is *parabhava*] applies to three things – “supreme,” “other” and the “other side.” In accordance with the first [meaning] it refers to the suchness that emerges as supreme. The meaning of “emerging supreme” is that because [emptiness] exists as never deviating from the bounds of the characteristic of suchness. In accordance with the second meaning, “other” is in the sense of being other than the world so it refers to [440] the excellent supramundane gnosis that is the nonconceptual gnosis. “Entity” or “nature” refers to what is being realized by that gnosis. In accordance with the third meaning, that which exists on the other side is the other nature. Because one has transcended the cycle of existence the other side of cyclic existence is the reality-limit, here “limit” referring to nirva^a which is the exhaustion of cyclic existence. Because it never deviates from the characteristic of suchness into some other aspect it is the thatness. The emptiness that is the absence of itself being intrinsic existence is called the emptiness of other entity or [other] nature.

Although the emptiness of intrinsic nature and so on were explained before that the explanation here does not constitute a repetition is because here they are presented from the point of view of a medium-length division [of emptiness]. The reason why the last two explanations appear repeatedly both in the extensive and medium-length presentations is for the purpose of eliminating the doubt that if one accepts that the ultimate reality to be the essential nature of things, that it exists at all times, and that it exists as the object of knowledge of the nonconceptual gnosis then it must have true existence. Therefore one should understand that these are not contradictory. These emptinesses as described were clearly proclaimed, that is explained, in the way of the perfection of wisdom, namely the *Mother of Conquerors*, just as explained here.

d) Conclusion by means of expressing the qualities of the level

Now, on the basis of presenting the unique qualities of the bodhisattva who especially aspires for the perfection of wisdom, to conclude the section on the perfection of wisdom, the text reads:

**Thus like the *skyu ru ra* fruit present in one's own palm
Which is illuminated by the rays of one's intelligence,
Realizing that all these three realms of existence are primordially devoid
Of birth one journeys to cessation through the power of conventional truth.**

With the light rays of intelligence derived from a thorough analysis in the manner as described before the bodhisattva, who has lit the light of illumination destroying the darkness that obstructs the seeing of suchness and directly realizes, as if seeing a fresh *skyu ru ra* lying on his open palm, this entire world of the three realms [441] as primordially devoid of intrinsic arising, he shall traverse to cessation through the power of, that is on the level of, nominal conventional truth. That is he will enter into its absorption.

To indicate that although he has arrived in the reality of cessation, it is not the case that he forsakes his thought of saving the sentient beings, the text reads:

**Though being always endowed with the mind belonging to cessation,
He will generate compassion towards the protectorless beings as well;**

This bodhisattva on the sixth level, although he is endowed constantly with the mind that belongs to the clear light that is the cessation, for the sentient beings that are protectorless he generates compassion as well; that his compassion increases [for them]. Therefore, in terms of his activities they remain part of cyclic existence, while his mind remains part of nirvāṇa [class of phenomena].

**He will also vanquish through his intelligence as described earlier
All those born from Sugata's speech and mid-level Buddhas.**

**For whom the white wings of conventional truth and suchness are spread
wide,
This king of swans shall take the lead in front of all swan-like beings,
And through the powerful force of the wind of virtues
He shall travel to the excellent shores of the ocean of Buddha's qualities.**

This bodhisattva on the sixth level will later, that is at an advanced level, also come to defeat or outshine through the power of his mind the Disciples, who are born from the Sugata's speech, and the mid-level Buddhas the Self-Enlightened Ones, all of them without exception. This bodhisattva of the sixth level, who resembles a king of swans spreading wide his two white wings – the right and left wings – of the stages of the path of the conventional truth, namely the vast path, and the stages of the path of profound suchness, he will take the lead at the front of swan-like trainees who are most excellent and, through the force of the powerful wind of virtue that he had gathered in the past, he will journey to the most excellent other shore of the ocean of the enlightened qualities of the conqueror Buddhas. Therefore, those who wish to follow in their footsteps too must traverse with the wings of both of the two stages of the path. So one should not be

satisfied with a path that does not possess either of the two wings nor with a partial path wherein one of the wings is broken; instead, one should traverse to the level of the Buddhahood through a path where both method and wisdom [aspects] are complete.

This, then is the thorough exposition of the sixth level of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Thought: An Extensive Exposition of Entering the Middle Way*.

PART IV: SEVENTH TO THE TENTH GROUND

Seventh Level: The Gone Afar

3) Explaining the [remaining] four levels, such as Gone Afar

This has four parts:

- a) Explaining the seventh level
- b) Explaining the eighth level
- c) Explaining the ninth level
- d) Explaining the tenth level

The first is as follows.

**Here at the Gone Afar within a moment
And moment he shall enter the cessation;
He shall attain excellent blazing of skilful means perfection as well.**

Here at the seventh level, Gone Afar, the bodhisattva will enter with a moment and moment, that is within a single moment, the cessation attained [earlier] on the sixth level. “Entering the cessation” refers to absorption into the reality limit; [here] thatness is being referred to as “cessation” because during the Noble One’s meditative equipoise all elaborations of dualistic perceptions will cease within thatness. This is stated extensively in the *Ten Levels Sutra*, such as in the following, for example:

Children of the Conquerors, the bodhisattva above the sixth level enters into the bodhisattva’s absorption of cessation, while the bodhisattva abiding on this seventh bodhisattva level enters and withdraw from the cessation even within a single instance of the mind. [Yet] he shall not be referred to as having directly actualized the cessation.⁶⁰⁷

Here on this level the perfection of skilful means come to blaze excellently, that is it becomes most highly purified. The manner in which it comes to be purified should be understood on the basis of the reasoning presented earlier with respect to the other levels. The last four perfections are posited on the basis of the excellence of [different] facets of the perfection of wisdom itself. It is the state of discriminating factors of existence that is being referred to as the perfection of wisdom; not some other aspect. As for the “skilful means” in the context of what is posited as the perfection of skilful means, the *Bodhisattva Levels* mentions a two sets of six [skilful means]. Of these the first, the six skilful means pertaining to accomplishing the qualities of the Buddha, are: [413] (1) that the bodhisattvas view all sentient beings with compassion, (2) that they understand the nature of all volitional forces perfectly as they are, (3) that they desire the unexcelled gnosis of enlightenment, (4) that they, because of looking at the sentient beings, do not

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forsake cyclic existence, (5) because having understood the volitional forces perfectly as they are they revolve in the cycle of existence through an unafflicted mind, and (6) because of their desire for Buddhahood their perseverance keep blazing. The six skilful means pertaining to ripening the sentient beings are: (1) That the bodhisattvas help transform the minor roots of virtue of the sentient beings so that they have immeasurable fruits, (2) likewise they [help beings] to achieve great roots of virtue with minimal strain, (3) they help those who are hostile towards the teaching to clear their anger, (4) they help those who remain in a neutral state of mind with respect to the teaching to enter it, (5) they help ripen those who have entered it, and (6) they help attain freedom for those who are ripened. Thus there are twelve skilful means.

This, then is the thorough exposition of the seventh level of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Thought: An Extensive Exposition of Entering the Middle Way*.

Eighth Level: The Immovable

b) Explaining the eighth level

This has three parts:

- i) How on this level aspiration excels and how one is roused from the cessation
- ii) Presenting how all the afflictions have ceased
- iii) Presenting how the ten masteries are obtained

The first as follows.

**Again and again in order that virtues superior to previous ones are attained,
The great being enters the Immovable [level]
Where one comes to become irreversible;
His aspirations will become extremely purified;
He will be roused from cessation by the Buddhas.**

The bodhisattva on the seventh level shall, in order that he attains again and again virtues superior to the ones attained earlier, this great being will enter the eighth level, the Immovable One, where the bodhisattva will come to be irreversible itself. That he attains again and again virtues superior to the ones below the seventh level [44] is stated, as in the following, in the *Ten Levels Sutra*:

O children of the Conquerors, it is thus: For example, the great ocean-faring ship has to travel with deliberate propulsion until it reaches the ocean. However, if, the moment it reaches the ocean, it will be able to travel without deliberate propulsion because of being propelled by the wind. The incalculable distance it will cover within a single day on the ocean is such that it cannot be covered within a hundred years through that earlier mode of travel of deliberate propulsion. Likewise, O children of Conquerors, with respect to gathering great collections of merit and perfectly pursuing the Great Vehicle, the distance to the omniscient gnosis reached within a short while with the spontaneous gnosis by voyaging in the ocean of bodhisattva deeds, this immeasurable [distance] cannot be covered by the earlier directed effortful activity even in a hundred thousand eons.⁶⁰⁸

Here, until arriving at the ocean is the metaphor for the seventh level and below; the voyage after reaching the ocean is the metaphor for traversing the path following the attainment of the eighth level.

When in the past this bodhisattva on the eighth level generated the first awakening mind of the supramundane stage he made countless hundred thousands of aspiration prayers, such as the ten great aspiration prayers. These come to be utterly purified on this level,

⁶⁰⁸ Kangyur, *

that is the perfection of aspiration excels greatly on this level. This level is posited as the level of the youth; for on the ninth level one attains the status of a regent while on the tenth one will be coronated by the Buddhas in a fashion of a universal monarch. On this Immovable Level when [the bodhisattva] enters the cessation, the ultimate reality, the Buddhas will rouse him from that absorption in cessation as well. [445] The *Ten Levels Sutra* states:

O children of the Conquerors, the bodhisattva who abides on this Immovable Level, one who has generated the power of aspiration and is abiding in the continuum of that door of reality, the Blessed Buddhas will seek to [help them] accomplish the gnosis of the Thatgatas. In this respect, [the Blessed One] also spoke thus: “O child of lineage, excellent! excellent! With respect to subsequent realization of the qualities of the Buddha, this then is the ultimate forbearance as well. Nevertheless, O child of lineage, you do not have the perfect unshared qualities of the Buddha, such as my ten powers and the four fearlessness. So to thoroughly seek these perfect qualities of the Buddha, strive in the practices; apply your perseverance. Do not forsake this door of forbearance as well. Child of lineage, although you have attained abiding in the pacifying liberation factors, think of these childish beings who are unpacified, thoroughly unpacified, for whom all the diverse afflictions emerge, whose mind are befuddled by all kinds of conceptualizations. Furthermore, O child of lineage, remember your past aspiration prayers, the need to achieve the welfare of the sentient beings, and [how] the doors of [Buddha’s] gnosis are inconceivable. Again, child of lineage, this is the ultimate reality of all phenomena. Irrespective of whether the Thatgatas appear [in the world] or not, this ultimate expanse abides alone. For example, all phenomena are emptiness, all phenomena are unobjectifiable. This does not differentiate the Thatgatas on the basis of some trivial [facts]; even the Disciples and the Self-Enlightened Ones attains this nonconceptual ultimate reality.⁶⁰⁹

And:

If, however, the Blessed Buddhas were not to make these bodhisattvas enter the doors that manifestly accomplish the omniscient gnosis, in that case, they will thoroughly transcend to nirvaṇa and the bringing about of the welfare of all sentient beings too will come to an end.⁶¹⁰

These [lines] state how on the eighth level when [the bodhisattva] attains mastery over the nonconceptual gnosis and remains equipoised upon it, they are roused from this and are admonished in the post equipoise stage to gather the accumulations as causes for attaining the Buddha’s powers and so on, and how even the Disciples and Self-Enlightened Ones attain direct realization of the ultimate reality. Therefore one should say that the assertion that if one possesses realizations of suchness it is not necessary to

⁶⁰⁹ Kangyur, *

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., p.*

strive in the gathering of other accumulations because it is sufficient to cultivate its familiarity alone is a mindless speech of an unlearned [mind].

ii) Presenting how all the afflictions have ceased

This is as follows.

**Since the attachment free mind does not abide together with flaws,
On the eighth level these stains will be pacified alongwith their roots;
With the afflictions ceased though he becomes unexcelled in the three regions,
He is not able to achieve all the wealth of the Buddha that resembles space.**

Because on this eighth level [the bodhisattva] is roused from the cessation by the Buddhas, on this level, since the attachment-free intelligence, that is gnosis, does not abide together with faults such as the afflictions of attachment, with the rising of the sun of nonconceptual gnosis on this level, the stains that resemble darkness – the afflictions that have emerged in the past, which are causes for taking birth in the cycle of existence, which are experienced in the three realms – all of these together with their roots will be thoroughly pacified, that is they will be abandoned. In this way, although all the afflictions have ceased and that they have become unexcelled in the three regions, namely the three realms, at this stage when the afflictions have ceased, the bodhisattva is [still] not capable of attaining the wealth of the qualities of the Buddha that are, like the space, beyond limits. Therefore, in order to attain these the eighth level bodhisattva needs to endeavor [further].

Now how does one know that on this level all the afflictions come to cease? The *Ten Levels Sutra* states: “Here, at this point, he shall thoroughly transcend to nirva[°]a.”⁶¹¹ So on this level there exists the freedom of mind from attachment to [all] three realms; for without attaining freedom from attachment, **with the ceasing of the afflictions**, one will not be able to actualize nirva[°]a.

iii) Presenting how the ten faculties are obtained

This is as follows.

**Though cyclic existence has ceased he obtains the ten masteries and through these
He shall portray his reality in diverse forms for the beings of cyclic existence.**

[Question:] “If on this level one attains freedom from attachment to the three realms birth in cyclic existence comes to an end, in that case, how does [the bodhisattva] thoroughly complete the causes for all the qualities of the Buddha?”

[Response:] Although for this bodhisattva on the eighth level birth in cyclic existence through the power of karma and afflictions may come to cease, when this level is attained, he attains ten masteries, such as mastery over gnosis. and through these ten

⁶¹¹ Kangyur, *

masteries this bodhisattva will, as explained in *dpal phreng mdo*, through a body that has the nature of the mental, he will display his reality in diverse forms for the beings of cyclic existence. There is no contradiction in this [body] bringing about a thorough completion of the accumulations.

The ten masteries are, as described extensively in the *Ten Levels Sutra*, the following: (1) As he has transformed the lifespans during inexpressible of the inexpressible eons he gains mastery over lifespan; (2) as he has engaged with gnosis of incalculable reflections on meditative absorptions he gains mastery the mind; (3) as he displays through his power the entire world systems as being adorned with numerous arrays of ornaments he gains mastery over material resources; (4) as he displays the fruition effects of karma through his power in perfect accordance with time he gains mastery over karma; [448] (5) as he displays birth in all the world systems he gains mastery over birth; (6) as he displays at all times total realization of whatever is wished for at any time he gains mastery over aspiration prayers; (7) as he displays at all times the entire world systems as being filled with the Buddhas he gains mastery over **intention** (*mos pa*); (8) as he displays miraculous emanations in all the Buddha realms he gains mastery over supernatural feats; (9) as he displays at all times the powers of the That-gatas, the fearlessness, the unshared qualities of the Buddhas, the major noble marks, the minor noble marks, and direct full enlightenment, he gains mastery over gnosis; (10) as he constantly displays the illumination of the doors of reality devoid of extremes and center he gains mastery over reality.

This, then is the thorough exposition of the eighth level of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Thought: An Extensive Exposition of Entering the Middle Way*.

Ninth Level: The Excellent Intellect

c) Explaining the ninth level

This is as follows.

**On the ninth level all [aspects] of his power will be completely purified;
Likewise he will also attain thoroughly pure qualities such as perfect knowledge.**

On the ninth level the power of the bodhisattva, that is all the perfection of power, shall come to be completed. As for the ten powers described in the context of the perfection of power, these are the powers presented in sutras, and stated in the following in the *Ornament of the Sage's Thought*:

Here, the power of intention is that there exists no indulgence in the afflictions at all; the power of altruistic intention is that the gnosis of the levels are thoroughly trained; the power of retention is that one never forgets the teachings; the power of meditative absorption is that one is always never distracted at all; the power of perfect resources is that one is versed in clearly differentiating the experiences of the limitless and endless world systems; [449] the power of **mastery (influence; dbang)** is that one has attained all hopes; the power of confidence is that one is versed in detailed differentiation of the experiences of all the qualities of the Buddha; the power of aspiration prayers is that one never forsakes the engagement in the deeds of all the Buddhas; the power of the perfections is that one never forsakes on one's part the thorough enhancement of the qualities of the Buddha, the thorough ripening of the sentient beings, and the conducts beneficial towards all beings; the power of great loving kindness is that one never forsakes excellently connecting all sentient beings to safety; the power of great compassion is that one dispels all the sufferings of all sentient beings; the power of ultimate reality is that one has directly actualized the ultimate reality, such as the illusion-like [emptiness]; the power of being blessed by all the Thatāgatas is that one is directly facing the gnosis that knows all aspects [of phenomena].⁶¹²

Just as the perfection of power is completed, likewise one attains the purification of one's own four qualities, such as the perfect knowledge of phenomena through discrimination. These are the perfect knowledge through discrimination of phenomena, meaning, etymology and confidence. Of these, the autocommentary states, the first knows the individual characteristics of each phenomena; the second knows the differentiations of all phenomena; the third knows how to present the phenomena individually without entanglement; and the fourth knows thoroughly the concordant causes of the phenomena without the loss of their continuum.⁶¹³ In the other classical texts, [450] these are

⁶¹² Tengyur, *

⁶¹³ MABh, Tengyur, p.*

explained in terms of the knowledge of the inexhaustible [nature of] the diverse terms of the phenomena, their referent which is the content [of these terms], the etymologies, and confidence.⁶¹⁴

This, then is the thorough exposition of the ninth level of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Thought: An Extensive Exposition of Entering the Middle Way*.

⁶¹⁴ See, for example, * Tengyur, *

Tenth Level: The Cloud of Dharma

d) The tenth level

This is as follows.

**On the tenth level he will receive total empowerment from the Buddhas,
And will also attain supreme state whereby gnosis comes to excel especially.
Just as rains fall from the rain clouds likewise from these bodhisattvas as well
Rains of dharma shall fall spontaneously for the virtue crops of the beings.**

The bodhisattva on the tenth level receives from all the Buddhas in all the directions the sublime or the supreme empowerment of great radiance. The manner in which this is received is that this bodhisattva, at the end of having attained a million-fold countless meditative absorptions, actualizes the meditative absorption called “being endowed with the empowerment that is [almost] equivalent to the all-knowing gnosis.” Then, immediately after this, there shall appear for him retinues [of disciples] with lotuses equal to atoms of great precious lotuses rivalling the size and number of a million-fold trichilocosmic world systems known as “Endowed with all the supreme aspects” up to, in its elaboration, being endowed with lotus-like retinues equal to atoms that exist in a million-fold trichilocosmic world systems. The body of that bodhisattva also remains in consonant with that [number]. The instant that meditative absorption is attained he will appear as being seated upon such a lotus. As he sits on this [lotus], light rays emerge from the mid-brows of the Buddhas who have converged from all the Buddha fields and confer empowerment upon him. So this is as explained in the *Ten Levels Sutra*. For this bodhisattva, out of the ten perfections, the perfection of gnosis comes to be excelled, that is it becomes thoroughly purified.

With regard to the identification of the gnosis and its characteristic as a perfection of wisdom, the *Bodhisattva Levels* states:

The knowledge of the presentations of all phenomena as they are is the perfection of gnosis. [451] Here, the wisdom that engages with the ultimate truth is the perfection of wisdom. The wisdom that engages with the conventional truth is the perfection of gnosis. This is the difference between the two.⁶¹⁵

Just as from the rain clouds rains fall down in order to help propagate the crops of the worldly people, in the same way, to help propagate the crops of virtue of the beings, from this child of the Conqueror on the tenth level too, spontaneously the rain of sublime dharma fall down, or made to fall. Therefore this level is called the “Cloud of dharma.”

This, then is the thorough exposition of the tenth level of the ultimate awakening mind, from *Thorough Elucidation of the Thought: An Extensive Exposition of Entering the Middle Way*.

⁶¹⁵ *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Tengyur, sems tsam, *

PART V: QUALITIES AND THE RESULTANT GROUND

The Qualities of the Ten Levels

iii. Presentation of the qualities of the ten levels

This has three parts:

- 1) Explaining the qualities of the first level
- 2) Explaining the qualities of the second up to the seventh levels
- 3) Explaining the qualities of the three pure levels

The first is as follows.

**At that point he shall see a hundred Buddhas;
He shall also realize their blessings as well;
At such time he shall remain for a hundred of eons,
He shall perfectly engage both the limits of beginning and end.**

**The intelligent one enters into hundred meditative absorptions and releases them;
He can shake hundred world systems and illuminate them;
Likewise through supernational feats he will ripen hundreds of sentient beings;
He will travel to Buddha fields equal to the number hundredfold.**

**He will open hundrefold dharma doors and this child of the Sage
Shall display for his body all bodily existences in their entirety;
Surrounded by retinues each of these bodies are beautiful and enriched,
With each body displaying [forms] consonant with hundredfold bodhisattvas.**

When attaining the first level of the ultimate awakening mind, the bodhisattva of the first level will see within a single instance, a single moment, hundred Buddhas; this bodhisattva will realize that he is being blessed by those hundred Buddhas as well. The lifespan of the one abiding on the first level shall endure for a hundred eons and during hundred eons he shall perfectly enter the limits of past and future as well. The meaning of this is that for a hundred eons, with limits of the past and future, he will enter into the seeing of the gnosis. This intelligent one, namely the bodhisattva, enters into the absorption of hundred meditations and will rise out of these. This bodhisattva will thoroughly shake hundred world systems; [452] he shall be able to illuminate hundred world systems and likewise, through his supernatural feats, this bodhisattva will be able to ripen hundred sentient beings. He shall travel to a number of Buddha fields that follow after the pattern of hundred, that is [Buddha fields] possessing this number. This bodhisattva shall open hundred doors of teaching and this child of Sage shall also display on his body hundred bodies as well. Corresponding to each of these hundred bodies, he shall display hundred bodhisattvas each in each of these bodies as well thus remaining adorned and enriched by their retinues.

2) Explaining the qualities of the second up to the seventh levels

This is as follows.

**The intelligent one abiding on the Perfect Joy, having attained
These qualities, abides in the Stainless and attain these in their thousandfold;
On these five levels the bodhisattvas attain hundred thousandfold, hundred
millionfold, then he shall attain hundred billionfold of these [qualities];**

He shall thoroughly attain the perfect transformations of all of these.

The intelligent one abiding on the Perfect Joy level, having attained the twelve sets of hundred qualities, when he progresses to the second level, just as described with respect to the first level, he shall abide on the second level, the Stainless, and shall perfectly attain these twelve sets of qualities [now] thousandfold. These very twelve sets of qualities are, on the next five levels – the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and the seventh – on these five levels the five bodhisattvas shall, in their respective order, thoroughly attain twelve sets of hundred thousand times, twelve sets of one hundred million times, twelve sets of one billion times, twelve sets of one hundred billion, and thousands of billions in their completeness, that is twelve sets of thousand billions.

3) Explaining the qualities of the three pure levels

From the eighth level, since these qualities cannot be counted in terms of any numbers, to describe these in terms of [453] being filled with subtle atoms, the text reads:

**The one abiding in the Immovable Level
Who is free of conceptualization, he shall attain
Qualities equal to the number of atoms
That exist in a thousand-fold trichilocosmic world.**

**The bodhisattva abiding on the Excellent Intelligence level,
He shall attain qualities measuring the amount of atoms
Of a tenfold combination of countless hundred thousand times
The qualities as described earlier.**

**On this tenth level, for the time being, his qualities remain
Well beyond the bounds of purview of speech;
The sumtotal of [his qualities] that are not a purview of speech,
They remain as numerous as there are atoms [in the universe].**

**In the pores of his body he can display bodhisattvas
Together with countless fully awakened Buddhas,
Likewise he can display within single moments
Celestial beings and demigods and so on as well.**

The one abiding on the eighth level, the Immovable level, one who has no conceptualization of self-grasping at persons and phenomena, he shall obtain qualities equal to the numbers of atoms that exist in the worlds of the three realms of the trichilocosmic universe, a **number that represents a multiplication of three thousand by a hundred thousand**. The bodhisattva who is abiding on the ninth level, the Excellent Intellect level, shall obtain the twelve sets of qualities described earlier equal to the number of atoms that exist in a million trichilocosmic universe, a number that represents **multiplication of hundred thousand countless by a tenfold**. Here on this tenth level, the qualities of this level is such that they go beyond the scope of the twelve qualities described earlier; [the bodhisattva] shall obtain qualities equal to the number of atoms that exist in the Buddha fields which are beyond expression of the inexpressible, a number that represents the adding together of those beyond the purview of verbal expression. “For the time being” is to indicate that the qualities on the tenth level are not exhausted by those mentioned here alone and to say that for the time being these shall be described first. This way it sets the sequence for the qualities that will be described later on.

Furthermore, this bodhisattva is capable of displaying emanations without conscious thoughtful intention; he is capable of displaying within each bodily pores countless bodhisattvas and embodiments of fully awakened Buddhas, each with a retinue of incalculable bodhisattvas, even changing forms into different aspects within single instance of time. Likewise, he is capable of displaying within each of his bodily pores within a single instance forms other than these, namely that of the five other realms of existence, [454] such as the celestial beings, demi-gods, humans and so on, displaying all of these distinctive forms without conflating each other. The word “as well” is to include those that are not mentioned. What are those unmentioned that are being included? They are Èndra, Br̥hma, worldly guardians, human kings, Disciples, Self-Enlightened Ones. This [word “as well”] summarizes the point of statements such as “He is capable of spontaneously teaching the dharma by assuming physical forms such as that of Èndra for the sake of the sentient beings who are to be tamed by the Tathāgata.”⁶¹⁶ As for extensive explanation, one should know this from the *Ten Levels Sutra*.

2. The resultant level

a. This has five parts:

- i. How one attains full awakening first
- ii. Presentation of the Buddha Bodies and their qualities
- iii. Presentation of the emanation body
- iv. Establishing the one vehicle
- v. Explanations of the time of manifest awakening and abiding

The first has two parts:

- 1) The actual point
- 2) Repudiating the objections

⁶¹⁶ * Kangyur, *

The first is as follows.

**Just as moon's light shine bright in a sky free of blemishes,
You shall strive once again for the level that engenders the ten powers,
And in Akani'ta you shall find the supreme state of peace
For whose sake you strove, which is unrivalled culmination of all qualities.**

Just as, for example, the light of moon is able to illuminate all those who are travelling in the sky that is free of obscuration, the one who has found that tenth [awakening] mind of generation that clears away the darkness obstructing the attainment of the Buddha qualities, knowing that he can attain the qualities of the Buddha by himself, once again he will endeavor in or initiate [efforts] on that tenth level, which is prior to the engendering of the Buddha's level endowed with the ten powers, to attain the level of the Buddhas. The supreme state for whose sake he initiate such an effort, this tranquil, unexcelled gnosis, is attained by the Blessed One in Akani'ta, that is you shall attain this in that realm alone. This gnosis represents the culmination of all qualities for in this all qualities, such as the foundations of mindfulness, have [455] culminated and are most excellent. It is unrivalled as well for there is nothing that is like it and there is nothing above it.

The translation of the first, when compared against the commentary, should appear as explained above. As for the second line, in Naktsō's version it reads "Once again you strove in that level that precedes the engendering of the ten powers," which is better. The expression "in Akani'ta alone" indicates that the basis wherein one attains full awakening for the first time, that is by someone who is not awakened yet, Akani'ta is required. The displaying of attaining full awakening by someone who is already awakened in the past is done in the desire realm. This is the standpoint of the perfection vehicle.

To present that when one attains full awakening first in the Akani'ta the Blessed One attains the gnosis that knows everything within a single instance, the text reads:

**Just as there exists no differentiations in the sky as in the containers,
No real differentiations exist in this [state] so therefore
If he has realized within his heart everything in an equal taste,
You, excellent knower, realize entire object of knowledge within an instance.**

Just as, for example, although there exist so many different varieties of containers, such as vases, bowls, and so on, as for the space that exists in or pervade these different containers, they are equal in being mere negation of obstruction and have no other differentiations [of properties]. In the same manner, although there exist so many different kinds of entities created by their causes and conditions, such as form, feelings, and so on, within the absence of intrinsic arising to which they all belong there exist no differentiation [of properties] created by real entities. Thus one should recognize [all these] as being equal taste or a single taste within suchness. Since you have perfectly realized within your heart this sameness of taste with a single instance of wisdom you

who is endowed with excellent knowledge, you have found the gnosis all objects of knowledge within a single moment of time. [456]

2) Repudiating the objections

This has two parts:

- a) Stating the opponent's standpoint
- b) Refuting that standpoint

The first is as follows.

**If this pacification is thatness in this the mind does not engage;
It's also illogical for ascertainment of object without the mind's engagement;
How can that which does not know be a knower? This is a contradiction.
Without the knower how can you show to others that "It's like this?"**

[Objection:] If you state "The absence of intrinsic arising is the suchness of form and so on" and assert that this, in turn, is cognized by intellect, in that case when you posit the pacification of intrinsic arising to be the suchness, you will have to admit that no intellect or wisdom will engages with it. For it such intellect does engage with suchness what kind of aspect will that intellect take? So it does not engage. Therefore, since there is no aspect of object that dawns [to the mind] no cognition engages with suchness. However, without the subjective cognizer engaging with an object it is illogical for an object of knowledge to be ascertained by a subjective cognizer as well. So how can this truth of suchness be known at all? It is illogical to say "Not knowing at all is the knowing of suchness" for how can something that does not know an object at all be an awareness; this is a contradiction in terms. Even though there is no arising or occurrence of a mind that engages with suchness, and without such a knower of suchness, how can it be tenable for you [to assert] "I have realized in my heart suchness with such characteristic" and teach this to others? This is untenable.

b) Refuting that standpoint

This has two parts:

- i) Repudiating the objection that suchness is not realized
- ii) Repudiating the objection that the knower is untenable

The first is as follows.

**When no-arising is thatness and that mind too is devoid of arising,
It is as if by showing its aspect the other comes to realize thatness;
Just as whatever aspects of object the mind assumes it thoroughly cognizes
That object, likewise in dependence on shown conventions one comes to know.**

In [the conventions of] the world when an awareness upholds the aspect that follows after the pattern of the object, that awareness is referred to as knowing that object. Just as, for example, when the mind arises in the aspect of its object, say a blue [object], one speaks of that mind coming to know that blue object. [457] Likewise, when the subjective awareness arises in the aspect that resembles exactly the object suchness, in dependence upon the conventional truth, the term is applied that suchness is cognized. The manner in which that awareness takes on the aspect of suchness is this. In that the absence of intrinsic arising is the objective suchness, as it is, when the subjective cognizer too is placed upon the aspect that is free of intrinsic arising, like pouring water into water, at that point, on the basis of it taking on or apprehending the aspect of the object, it is posited as realizing the suchness. Therefore the fault [raised in] the previous objection does not follow. In Naktsō's translation, it reads "At that point the realization of suchness is the upholding of its aspect itself." So as it appears [in this reading] not having "just as" [in the root text] is more accurate.

Here, the autocommentary states:

Therefore, it is on the basis of designation one posits realizing suchness; in actual fact, it is not the case that something is known by something. Because both the cognizer and the cognized are unborn.⁶¹⁷

The meaning of the expression "on the basis of designation" is, as found in the line "In dependence on conventions it is cognized," not a case of inherent knowing but posited as knowing on the basis of mere designation. This is not to posit that it is a pseudo knowing of suchness. The meaning of the expression "in actual fact" and so on is to indicate that other than knowing on the basis of mere dawning of the aspect of absence elaboration it is known in a manner similar to perceiving an aspect such as yellow or blue [colors]. This is because just as the object suchness is unborn the subject too has the aspect of being unborn by virtue of intrinsic nature. This being so, in response to objections from the opponent that there is no possibility of suchness appearing to an awareness, [458] if the aspect of the object does not appear the awareness does not engage with its object, and if it does not engage so then it would not know that object, and if it does not know it is a contradiction for that subject to be a cognizer, these arguments such as if the aspect of its object does not appear to the awareness it does not engage with its object are accepted even by oneself, one does not respond to these points. Instead [Candrakīrti] rejects [the suggestion] that there is no possibility for aspect of the ultimate truth to appear to the mind and states that its aspect does appear to the mind and on the basis of the appearance of such an aspect one posits that it cognizes that object. Given this, to say that in this system there exists no nonconceptual gnosis that cognizes the ultimate truth is denigrate the supreme realization of the Noble Ones.

Here with such lines as "Within a single moment the objects of knowledge are realized" it has been stated that one attains the gnosis that knows everything within a single moment of time and that the gnosis that knows reality-as-it-is does not know in the manner of the cognized and the cognizer as being separate. With respect to these

⁶¹⁷ MABh, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

statements, it seems necessary to know well how the Buddha knows reality-as-it-is and reality-in-its-manifoldness so I shall explain this briefly in the following.

Now here, until one attains Buddhahood it is not possible for a single instance of cognition to have the perception of diverse individual subjects as well as the direct knowledge of their ultimate reality [at the same time]. The knowledge of these two occur in an alternate manner. However, from the point when all the residual impressions of grasping at true existence are exhausted and one has become fully awakened one abides at all times in the meditative equipoise on the ultimate truth. So there is no alternations of equipoise and post equipoise stages on the basis of rising out of that [equipoise]. This is, as described in the autocommentary on *The Two Truths*, “Within a single instance of wisdom/ He pervades the entire expanse of knowledge.”⁶¹⁸ Therefore, since there is no post equipoise gnosis that knows reality-in-its-manifoldness that is of different entity from that gnosis of meditative equipoise, [459] one has to accept that all the objects of knowledge within the two truths are known by a single gnosis. When in relation to the ultimate reality it constitutes a gnosis knowing reality-as-it-is, at that time, within the perspective of that mind, since all dualistic appearances are thoroughly calmed, that gnosis abides in a single taste in the manner of water poured into water. When in relation to the subject it constitutes a gnosis knowing reality-in-its-manifoldness, although the dualistic perception of object and subject being perceived distinctly does exist, since all residual impressions for erroneous dualistic perceptions have been eradicated, this is a dualistic perception that is not mistaken with respect to its appearing object. It is not an erroneous dualistic perception. That this is not erroneous has already been explained well elsewhere.⁶¹⁹

That both equipoise and post-equipoise stages exist on the level of the Buddha is stated in the commentary in following [lines] of the *Sublime Continuum*:

Wisdom, gnosis and thorough freedom,
Because they are luminous, radiating, and pure,
Not separate they resemble light and its rays
As well as the full circle of the sun.⁶²⁰

Here the commentary states:

Here, the nonconceptual supramundane wisdom that exists in the mind of the Buddha, because it abides nearby to clear away the darkness [that obscures] the sublime suchness of the objects of knowledge, it shares characteristics that correspond to a luminous light. The gnosis attained in its aftermath that knows all objects of knowledge, because it engages with all the aspects of the entities that are the objects of knowledge, it shares characteristics that correspond to the radiating network of light rays.⁶²¹

⁶¹⁸ Jñānagrabha, *Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁶¹⁹ ? Tsashe tikchen? LTC, ?

⁶²⁰ * Tengyur, sems tsam, *

⁶²¹ Thogdrel, *Tengyur, sems tsam, *

“The nonconceptual supramundane gnosis” refers to the equipoise; the meaning of the word “after” in the expression “attained in its aftermath” is not in the temporal sense of having attained in after rising out of that equipoise. The meaning is that it is attained or that it emerged by the power of that equipoise. [460] The meaning of the lines “objects of knowledge” and so on is that this post equipoise gnosis is posited on the basis of its engagement with the entire expanse of knowledge. So it is, from the point of view of the subjects, not a wisdom knowing reality-as-it-is and, from the point of view of their ultimate reality, not a wisdom knowing reality-in-its-manifoldness. If one understands this point well, one will then understand the following in the *The Truths*:

That which is devoid by the constructed essence,
This alone that appears as it is,
All things that have arisen in such dependence,
These the omniscient sees directly.⁶²²

And:

When one does not perceive the natures
Of [dichotomy of] knower and the known,
At that point signs do not appear;
And since abiding is stable one does not rise.⁶²³

Thus it states that the Buddha directly knows all the appearances of reality-in-its-manifoldness and yet, it states again, that he does not perceive any knower or the known object in the manner of dualistic perceptions; also other great ones have made statements similar to these. With respect to these there is no need to say that not perceiving either the knower of the known object is from the point of view of the Buddha himself while direct knowing of all objects of knowledge is the mode of knowing in context of his appearance to other trainees therefore there is gnosis that belongs to the Buddha’s level. One will be able to understand that there is not even the slightest contradiction in the fact that there can be two different modes of knowing for a single gnosis with respect to two [different] objects.

“In that case,” one might wonder, “there will be a contradiction between the presentation here and the presentation of the definition of the two truths in the line “All entities with the seeing correctly and falsely.” There is no contradiction.

The definition of the two truths stated earlier is understood in general while the mode of knowing of the Buddha’s gnosis represents a special case unique in comparison to [the mode of knowing] the tenth level and below. [461] Therefore, within the perspective that includes even the mode of the knowing of the Buddhas, the definition of the ultimate truth is this: “That which is found by a valid rational cognition seeing the perfect truth and that this [awareness] is a valid rational cognition with respect to that object.” Through this one should also understand the definition of conventional truth as well.

⁶²² * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁶²³ Ibid., p.*

Similarly, one should understand how in relation to specific objects the conventional and ultimate truths are known. For example, how [ultimate truth] is found by the gnosis knowing reality-as-it-is and how this gnosis constitutes a gnosis knowing reality-as-it-is in relation to that object, and how [conventional truth] is found by the gnosis knowing reality-in-its-manifoldness and how that gnosis constitutes a gnosis knowing reality-in-its-manifoldness. Here one should also recall our own standpoint [presented] earlier when analyzing whether self-cognition is tenable or not.

ii) Repudiating the objection that the knower is untenable

This has two parts:

- (1) The actual point
- (2) Presenting the actual substantiation

The first is as follows. Now I shall present my response to your objection “According to you, as there is no knower how can one teach others that this is the suchness.” Although it is true that the consciousness that realizes suchness on the level of the Buddhas is fused in a single taste with its object, namely the ultimate truth that is the absence of intrinsic arising, it is not the case that there exists no realization of suchness in the world. How is this so? The point of this objection is that if [the Buddha] abides at all times in the manner of a single taste with suchness there will be no teacher who will possess any conceptualization with the intention to teach the dharma. And if this is not present there will be no teaching of the dharma. Following this [objection] the response is given on how even without conceptualization the dharma being taught remains tenable. To this objection, I shall now present the response:

**Through his Body of Perfect Resource held by the merits,
And through the force of his emanations, such as space and others,
The sounds that emerge teaching the truth of reality,
From these too the world cognizes the truth as well.**

The form embodiment of the Buddha wherein the Buddhas, while abiding in the form body, actualizes the truth body that is the ultimate expanse, [462] such [a form body] is sustained or created by many hundredfold accumulations of merit. This is the perfect enjoyment body that is endowed with a varieties of inconceivable forms and is the resource for the bodhisattvas to enjoy the wealth of dharma. Therefore, on the basis of the teachings presented by the sound that emerges from this Buddha body the world, that is the spiritual trainees, who are suitable vessel for listening will come to know the suchness without distortion. Let alone [the sounds] that emerge from such Buddha body engendered by a hundredfold merits, even on the basis of the sound revealing the dharma issuing from the emanations empowered by that Enjoyment Body, not only that, also [such sounds] issuing forth, through the might of such emanations, from such inanimate sources like the skies, the grasses, the trees, the walls, and the rocky cliffs, the trainees will come to know the suchness.

(2) Presenting the actual substantiation

One might wonder “Although when teachings are given in such manner without the thought processes of mind and mental factors there is no activity of intention at present, how can this be a cause for the emergence of the activity of teaching dharma?” To cite an analogy to illustrate this, the text reads:

**Just as the wheel that has been turned on
By a powerful potmaker for a long time with great effort,
Even while that exertion no longer remains arisen [it still turns],
The operations of the one residing in the body of truth,
The activities propelled by being’s virtues and aspirations are inconceivable.**

Just as, for example, in this world a wheel that has been spun with great effort by a strong potter continues to spin [even] after he is gone and when no effort is being exerted to spin the wheel at present and is seen as a cause for [creating] pots and so on, likewise, when one attains full awakening of Buddhahood, while there is no conscious thought of effort and exertion the unfolding of the enlightened activity of that Buddha who is abiding within the nature of Truth Body resembles a wish-granting jewel and wish-fulfilling tree. Such enlightened activity emerges through the propulsion of or due to the force of the maturation of the virtuous karma gathered by the beings to hear such teachings of dharma from the Buddhas [463] as well as the extraordinary aspirational prayers made by the Buddhas in the past when they were bodhisattvas. This is most inconceivable. What kinds of aspirational prayers [did the Buddhas made as bodhisattvas]? These are such as the following: “May I too become such [a being] who, while dedicated to the fulfillment of the welfare of the sentient beings, remain unstirred even for an instance from the ultimate expanse yet never strays from taming the sentient beings in their perfect timely moments.” Here the citations presented from the sutras as substantiations, these are found in Naktso’s translation.

ii. Presentation of the Buddha Bodies and their qualities

This has two parts:

- 1) Presentation of the Buddha Bodies
- 2) Presentation of the qualities such as the powers

The first has three parts:

- a) Presenting the Truth Body
- b) Presenting the Enjoyment Body
- c) Presenting the causally concordant Buddha Body

The first is as follows.

From the burning off of all dry firewoods, this calmed state

**Is the Truth Body of the conqueror Buddhas;
In that there is no arising and no cessation;
As the mind has ceased it's directly experienced with the body.**

Now to describe [the Body Body] from the point of view of the Truth Body, from the burning off of all the dry firewoods of the objects of knowledge by the fire-like gnosis that appears in the form of two Buddha Bodies having the nature of subjective gnosis, as it is immersed in the absence of intrinsic arising of the objects of knowledge just as it is, the calmed state that is the suchness endowed with the aspect of an awareness that is intrinsically unarisen, this is the Truth Body of the Conquerors. It is from this perspective the *Diamond Cutter* states:

The Buddhas view the ultimate reality;
The saviors [view] the Truth Body;
The ultimate reality is not knowable;
Therefore it cannot be known.⁶²⁴

Thus it states the Buddhas view or remain equipoised in ultimate reality at all times and the ultimate embodiment is the Truth Body; and, when this ultimate reality is known, it is not knowable in the manner of dualistic appearances. This Truth Body of suchness is, at that time, [464] has no arising and no cessation. And from this point of view, it has been stated in the sutras “O Mañjuśrī, that which is known as no-arising and no-cessation is given the term Tathāgata.”⁶²⁵ This being so since on the level of the Buddhas the conceptual thought processes of mind and mental factors have ceased and do not operate with respect to the truth of suchness, which is the object of the gnosis, the two – the nonconceptual gnosis and suchness – remain indivisibly fused like water poured into water. Therefore this state is posited on the conventional level as being first actualized or obtained first by the Enjoyment Body. In Naktsö’s translation, to substantiate this point citations from *Phyir mi ldog pa’I ‘khor lo’I mdo* appeared to be given.

With respect to the meaning of the statement “As the mind has ceased ..” in the *Clear Words*, it reads “A sutra states ‘What is the ultimate truth? If there is not even the turnings of the mind, what need is there to speak of the letters?’” Therefore, it is the absence of conceptualization.”⁶²⁶ So it explains the absence of the turnings of the mind in terms of the absence of conceptualization. Here too in the autocommentary, having explained the meaning of “being calmed” in terms of being free of mind and mental factors, as a metaphor to illustrate how although calmed [the Buddha] is capable of fulfilling other’s welfare the wish-fulfilling tree and wish-granting jewels are cited. At the end of this, [autocommentary] writes “although there is no conceptualization, like the wish-fulfilling tree and wish-granting jewel,” and clearly states how [the Buddha] is free of conceptualizing mind and mental factors. So to cite this [passage from *Entering the Middle Way*] as a source to claim that there is no gnosis at the level of the Buddhas constitutes a failure to understand the meaning of the text and a grave denigration.

⁶²⁴ *Kangyur, shes phyin, *

⁶²⁵ *Kangyur, *

⁶²⁶ PSP, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

b) Presenting the Enjoyment Body

This is as follows.

**Like a wishgranting tree this tranquil body is radiant;
Like a wishgranting jewel it does not conceptualize;
Until the beings are free it remains eternal as a resource for the world;
This will appear to those who are free of conceptual elaborations.**

This Enjoyment Body, the embodiment by which the Truth Body is actualized, [465] because it is free of discursive mind and mental factors, it is the pacification body. Although it is nonconceptual that it is capable of fulfilling the welfare of sentient beings is illustrated by the following. Just like the wish-fulfilling tree and the wish-granting jewel, without conceptualization, it serves as the cause for the realization of the aims of the spiritual trainees. Until all beings attain freedom, for the sake of being a resource for the world, this Buddha body always remains for a long time. Therefore, so long as the world [remains] and so long as space [endures], in this manner the Buddhas engage only in the welfare of the sentient beings and abide so. This Enjoyment Body will appear only to those bodhisattvas whose mind are free of conceptual elaborations, that is those who have attained the [bodhisattva] levels whereby they have achieved the stainless mirror of wisdom through their dual accumulations. It does not appear directly to those on the ordinary stage who have conceptual elaborations. *Seven Stanzas on Going for Refuge* too states:

The Form Body of the Buddhas,
It blazes [brightly] with major and minor marks;
Due to the aspirations of the beings
He who assumes varied embodied forms,

That which is born from
Immeasurable merit stores,
If it is seen by children of the conquerors
Who abide on the ten levels,

The Truth and the resources of this Buddha body
Represent the activities of the conquerors.⁶²⁷

c) Presenting the causally concordant Buddha Body

This has three parts:

- i) How [the Buddha] displays all his activities within a single Buddha Body and bodily pore
- ii) How at that site all the activities of others are displayed

⁶²⁷ * Tengyur, *

iii) Explaining how he has attained perfect mastery over his enlightened intention

The first is as follows. To explain how, whether emerging from the force of the Truth Body or the Form Body described earlier, [466] the essence of the Emanation Body that is other than the Enjoyment Body, which is causally concordant, namely the effect of the Truth Body and the Enjoyment Body, that which has emerged from the cause of taming the sentient beings, these two possess extraordinary force, the text reads:

**The Sage displays all the aspects of the occurrence vivid,
How within a single temporal stage and with respect to one Form Body
That shares causal identity with that [Truth Body], how in the context
Of its birth what ceased before, [these occurred] with clarity and free of conflation.**

**Sages in however many Buddha fields there are,
All of their activities and their powerful forces,
However many assemblies of Disciples that are [as their retinues],
However many physical embodiments of bodhisattvas there are,
However many teachings there are however many their masters,
However many that hear the teachings and engage in their practices,
However many engaged in giving and making offerings to them –
He displays all of these within a single body [of existence].**

**Likewise when engaged in ethical discipline and forbearance,
Perseverance, concentration and wisdom whatever practices there are
In the past [of these] all of these that have been engaged in,
He displays these clearly even within [a single] bodily pore.**

Because the Sovereign Sage reveals within a single embodiment that is causally concordant with the Truth Body and Perfect Enjoyment Body all his birth series from beginningless cycle of existence that have now ceased, exhausting all possible limits of past occurrences, he displays spontaneously within a single instance of time, like a reflection [appearing] on a utterly unblemished mirror, all these past events vividly and unerringly, that is without conflating each other. For example, he displays how, when the Blessed One engaged in the perfection of giving in the past, which Buddhas did he made offerings and honored, in which Buddha fields [with] lakes that has the nature of lapis lazuli adorned with sentient beings living within the he displayed [enlightened deeds] such as the Sage taking birth, what is the level of force and power of the body and activities of such Buddhas, how large was the congregation of the retinue of the assembly of Disciples of these Buddhas, how many became [true] Sangha by striving in the dharma, how many bodhisattvas there were in such Buddha fields whose bodies were adorned with noble and exemplary marks and how many living with enjoyment of everyday needs like the monastic robes, food, and shelter, how many teaching the dharma pertaining to the one vehicle or the three vehicles, how intelligent laity members were there like those born in the brahmin caste and how many monastics, [467] how many, after having heard the dharma, took precepts whether in its entirety or an incomplete form, and engage in what kinds of bodhisattva deeds. For what length of time did he

engage in giving to these Buddhas, bodhisattvas and Disciples and to what degree of measure did he make such offerings to them, all of these he displays within a single embodiment.

Just as he displays all the events that took place pertaining to his perfection of giving, he displays within a single embodiment all the events of past pertaining to his practices of the perfections of ethical discipline, of forbearance, of perseverance, of concentration and the perfection of wisdom. Thus the explanation given in relation to giving should be extended [to these perfections]. Not only does he display simultaneously within a single embodiment, he also displays vividly even within a single bodily pore all his past activities.

ii) How at that site all the activities of others are displayed

This is as follows.

**The Buddhas of the past and those yet to come,
Those in the present who are teaching dharma in resounding voice
To the limits of the space, who relieve the beings caught in suffering,
Who remain in the world, so from the initial upholding of the mind
Until the essence of enlightenment, he realize the nature of their deeds
As a magical illusion and displays these clearly within a single bodily pore.**

**Likewise he displays within a single bodily pore
The deeds of the bodhisattvas of the three times,
The deeds of the Noble Self-Enlightened Ones and the Discples,
And [beneficial] deeds of remaining beings [as well].**

Just as he displays all of his own [past] activities, [the Sage] is capable of displaying simultaneously within a single bodily pore all the deeds of the Buddhas that have appeared in the past, will appear in the future, the Buddhas who at present reside in the world relieving the beings who are gripped or tormented by sufferings through teaching dharma in a voice resounding to the edge of the space, all their deeds from their generation of the [awakening] mind at first to the heart of awakening. For if some ordinary magician can through the force of spells and substances display diverse appearances of habitats and sentience upon their own body, the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas who [468] understands the nature of things to be indistinguishable from that of magical illusions with respect to their truth and falsehood and have cultivated this familiarity over so many eons, how can they not perform such conjurations? Therefore what learned person would not realize this or would harbor doubt even though he realizes this? He would not. So on the basis of this metaphor one should cultivate even greater conviction.

So just as he displays simultaneously his own deeds and that of the other Buddhas within a single bodily pore, he is capable of displaying simultaneously within a single bodily pore all the deeds of the bodhisattvas of the three times, the Noble Self-Enlightened Ones

and Disciples of the three times, as well as the “remainders,” namely the deeds during the stage of the ordinary being.

iii) Explaining how he has attained perfect mastery over his enlightened intention

Thus, having described the three perfect Buddha Bodies, to present how, even though without conceptualization, he possesses perfect control or mastery over his intention, the text reads:

**Since this purified [being] operates through [mere] thought,
Although he displays in place of a single atom worlds to the limits of space
And the atoms that exist in countless world systems,
The atoms do not become grosser nor do the worlds smaller.**

**There is no count to number of atoms that exist
On the Rose Apple continent equal to the diverse deeds
That you, who possess no conceptualization, display
Within each and every single moment until the end of cyclic existence.**

This deed of the Buddha purified of all stains operates through mere intention, that is it is capable of displaying through [mere intention] the worlds that extend to the limits of space within the space of a single atom. When he displays the expanse of the entire universe without residue within the space of a single atom, that single atom does not become grosser nor does the universe become subtler, that is smaller. Similarly, the number of the varieties of deeds displayed within a single instance of time by you, you who do not possess conceptualization, until the end of cyclic existence, this cannot be found in the number of atoms that exist in all the worlds. [469] The first is from the point of view of space, while this [later] is from the point of view of time.

2) Presentation of the qualities such as the powers

This has four parts:

- a) Presentation of the ten powers in brief
- b) Presentation of these in detail
- c) How all the qualities cannot be expressed
- d) The benefits of presenting two qualities

a) Presentation of the ten powers in brief

Since the Buddhas are clearly distinguished on the basis of the ten powers, to present in rough the divisions of the ten powers the text reads:

**The power of what is appropriate and what is inappropriate;
Likewise the knowing of the ripening of karmic deeds;**

**Knowledge of [all the] diverse aspirations;
The power of knowing the various elements;**

**Likewise knowledge of excellent faculty and that which is not;
Knowledge of [paths] travelling to all destinations;
The power of knowledge concerning concentrations,
Liberation factors, meditations and absorptions;**

**The knowledge entailing the recollection of previous lives;
Likewise knowledge of death and rebirth;
The power of knowledge concerning the cessation of pollutants –
These then are the ten powers [of the Buddha].**

With respect to the powers of the Sage, there is the power of what is appropriate and what is not appropriate, similarly there is the power of cognizing or knowing the karma and its fruitional effects, the power of knowing the diverse [natural] spheres, the power of knowing the diverse aspirations, likewise the power of knowing the excellent and non-excellent faculties, the power of knowing the path to all [destinations], the power of cognizing or knowing the concentrations, the liberating factors, the meditative states and the absorptions, similarly there is the power of knowing through remembering the past states of existence, and the power of knowing the exhaustion of the pollutants. Thus the power [of the Buddha] exists in terms of these ten.

b) Presentation of these in detail

This has two parts:

- i) Presenting the five, such as the power of knowing what is appropriate and what is not appropriate
- ii) Presenting the five, such as the power of knowing the path traversing to all [destinations]

The first is as follows.

**That which definitely arises from a certain cause,
This those who know has stated to be the appropriate;
The contrary to what is described is the inappropriate and the unobstructed
Knowledge of the limitless knowables is described as power.**

**With respect to extremely diverse karma and its fruitional effects,
Such as those desired and undesired, their opposites and their exhausting factor,
The knowledge that engages with these unimpeded potency and force,
That which pervades all three times, this [too] is described as power.**

**The powerful yearnings emerging from such factors as attachment,
Such extreme diversities as that of the weak, the medium, and the extraordinary,**

**Knowing even the aspirations that are veiled by other factors,
This is known as the power pervading all beings without exception.**

**Those skilled in differentiating the natural spheres of Buddhahood,
They has stated the nature of eyes and so forth to be the spheres;
The knowledge of the fully awakened Buddhas is infinite;
So that which engages with all the distinct spheres is accepted to be a power.**

**Conceptualization and so on that are highly sharp are accepted as the excellent;
Those of the medium stage and the inferior are described as not the excellent;
That which can accomplish each other [of the faculties] such as the eyes,
This knowing of all aspects, free of attachment, is described as a power.**

The cause from which a specific effect will definitely arise and such as cause is the [appropriate] basis of that effect. This was taught by the Buddhas who know this to be so. This is, for example, the origination of unattractive fruitional effects from nonvirtue and the attainment of nirvāṇa through the path of Noble learners and so on. That which is contrary to what has been just described, [470] this is known as “inappropriate.” This is, for example, the origination of unattractive fruitional effects from virtue and the coming into being of the eighth existence through the power of karma on the basis of attaining the path of seeing, which are inappropriate and lacks any possibility. The elimination of [all] obstructions to knowing the entire expanse of knowledge within the class of what is appropriate and inappropriate, this absence of obstruction is described as the power of knowing what is appropriate and what is not appropriate.

The “desired,” which is the virtuous, and the “undesired,” namely the nonvirtuous karma, thus two unmixed [karma] and those that are opposite to these two, namely the mixed karma, and also with respect to the extremely diverse fruitional effects of these karma too, the knowledge that is capable of engaging with unobstructed potency and force, [knowledge] that pervades the entire spectrum of the field of knowledge of karma and its effects encompassed with the three times, this is accepted as the power of knowing the effects of karma.

With respect to desires stemming from or engendered through the power of its seeds of attachment and afflictions such as aversion, which are exemplified by this, and confidence and so on, which are included in the “etc.,” there are extremely great diversities like that which is inferior, median, and some extraordinary desire, and there are those other factors that one continually indulges in which veil or obscure the seeds of the aspirations referred to earlier. The knowledge that operates or engages in [all] three times with respect to such aspirations and pervade all knowable aspirations without exception, this is called the power of knowing all the diverse aspirations.

The Buddhas who are versed in the differentiations of all of the distinctions of the elements, spoke of the eyes and so on, which include from the ears up to the mental, thus the six elements, the six [objects] from forms up to the mental objects, [471] the six consciousnesses from eye consciousness to mental consciousness, including their nature,

the emptiness of the inner. The boundless engagement of the knowledge of the fully awakened Buddhas with respect to the characteristics of all the differentiations of these elements, this is accepted as the Buddhas' power of knowing the diverse elements.

The conceptualization that excessively superimposes what is not the perfect truth, since it empowers the engendering of attachment and so on, it is referred to as a "faculty." "And so on" includes the faculty of confidence and so on. Those that are highly sharp these are accepted as excellent [faculties]; those that share the status of being medium level faculty or dull faculty, these are described as being not of excellent [faculty]. That which is devoid of attachment or obstruction to the knowledge of all the aspects of [these faculties] and the twenty-two faculties, such as the faculty of eyes, with respect to the nature of each of these that is capable of accomplishing or fulfilling their corresponding effects, this is stated to be the power of knowing the excellent and non-excellent faculties.

ii) Presenting the five, such as the power of knowing the path traversing to all [destinations]

This is as follows.

**A certain path leads to the Conquerors while certain to the awakening
Of the Self-Enlightened, [some] to the awakening of the Disciple,
Some to the hungry ghosts, some to the animal realm, some to the hells;
The knowledge of this, free of attachment, is accepted as a power.**

**With respect to the varieties of yogis that exist in the diverse worlds,
Their concentrations, their eight liberating factors and tranquil abidings,
The varieties of their absorptions such as [the number] one plus eight,
The unobstructed knowledge of these is described as a power.**

**So long as deluded so long in the past with regard to the sentient life
Of my own self and [other] sentient beings, of each and every being,
The wisdom the cognizes each of these together their bases,
As well as their places, this [too] is described as a power.**

**The sentient beings' transition into death of each and every sentient being,
Where they took birth and the worlds inhabited stretching to the edge of space,
Because the knowledge engages with these diverse factors
In perfect accord with time, this unattached thoroughly pure [wisdom] is accepted
as a power.**

**Through the power of the knowing of all aspects [Buddhas know]
The conqueror's swift ceasing of the afflictions alongwith their impressions,
As well as the cessation of afflictions of the Disciples and so on,
The knowledge that is unattached with respect to these is accepted as a boundless
power.**

Some path, such as that which leads to the conqueror's state, some that leads to the awakening of the Self-Enlightened Ones, while others that lead to the awakening of the Disciples, [some] journeying to the hungry ghosts, to the animals, to the celestial gods, to the humans, and to the hells. "And so on" indicates such diverse [paths] as those that are perfect and those that are determined to be false paths. The unobstructed knowing of these, which is boundless, is accepted as the power knowing the paths of the transmigrating beings.

Corresponding to the distinctions of yogis that exist in the limitless worlds, based on their differentiations, the distinct meditative absorptions, such as the four concentrations, the eight liberating factors, and their tranquil abidings, [474] and the varieties of absorptions which number one and eight – namely the nine absorptions that abide by means of their limits – the unobstructed knowing of these factors of enlightened class is described as the power knowing the unenlightened class of phenomena and the enlightened class of phenomena.

So long as deluded so long, that is while abiding in the beginningless cycle of existence, that is from one [birth] to another, in these past time with respect to my own self and other sentient beings, however many beings of existence there were of each sentient being, all of these limitless sentient beings along with their bases, namely their causes, the recollection of these as well as the recollection of their [specific] features such as "I and others had this and that color," to recall "We were born from such and such [place] to such and such [state]" is to remember in terms of place and direction, that wisdom which is unobstructed in with respect to such objects of recollection, this is described as the power knowing the recollection of past states of existence.

The sentient beings' transition into death, of each and every sentient being, as well with respect to their births connecting to [new] aggregates which abide in the worlds stretching to the edges of space, all the multitudes [of birth] created by the sculptor of karma, because [the Buddhas'] knowledge being thoroughly perfect engages unobstructedly with these in accord with perfect timing, it is accepted as the power knowing limitless objects, namely the transition into death and birth.

The conquerors who know all the aspects [of reality know] the afflictions to cease or will be destroyed alongwith their impressions, [and] the knowledge that is devoid of attachment or obstruction with respect to the cessation or the elimination of the afflictions through intelligence, namely the uncontaminated wisdom, by Disciples and so on, which include the Self-Enlightened Ones, [473] this is accepted as the power of knowing the limitless cessation of contaminants. "Swiftly" indicate how the remaining extremely subtle residual impressions are eliminated within a single instance by the Buddha's gnosis.

Here, with regard to the residual impressions of the afflictions, the commentary states:

That which imbue and besmirch the mental continuum and lead after its pattern, this is a residual impression. The “depth” of the afflictions, its “habit,” its “root,” and “residual impressions” are synonyms.⁶²⁸

It states that although the Disciple and Self-Enlightened *arhants* have eliminated the afflictions, they have not eliminate that residual impressions. Again, it states “Now, the residual impressions of ignorance is an impediment for total knowledge of the objects of knowledge,”⁶²⁹ so it is described as the obscuration to knowledge as well.

In this system, since the grasping at true existence of phenomena is accepted to be an affliction, the principal obscuration to knowledge must be taken to be the propensities for illusory perceptions of duality. Given that Noble Nagarjuna and his son do not give clear identification of what is obscuration to knowledge, this [explanation] is based on what is found explained here [in the commentary]. Again, the commentary states:

The propensities of attachment and so on, these, in turn, will cease only for the omniscience and the Buddha, not for others.⁶³⁰

As stated here, the seed of afflictions that is described as having come to an end for the Disciple and Self-Enlightened *arhants* and on the eighth level, this is not the same as the propensities of afflictions being referred to here. With regard to the extremely subtle form of this propensity, the point at which the uninterrupted path of the last stage of the continuum of the tenth level is about to arise and the point at which this extremely subtle [propensity] is about to cease, these are simultaneous. The utterly released path that constitutes the first elimination of this [propensity] is [474] is the first instance of the Buddha’s gnosis. Thus [Candrakīrti] states [this propensity] as being destroyed through the power of the knowledge of all aspects [of reality].

Thus the knowing of all the objects of knowledge by these powers is on the manifest evident level and, since it is not possible for the Buddha’s direct perception to have an implicit cognition, it must know these on the basis of these appearing to it. That it is not the standpoint of this system to [accept the Buddha’s] knowing without the aspects [of the objects] appearing to it has been clearly explained in the commentary on the *Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning*.⁶³¹ Therefore it is not the case that the past and future are known indirectly on the basis of directly knowing the present. Here, for example, with respect to the present, such as this very day, since the past and the future defined in relation to it do not exist [at its time] these are not known at that very time, there is no contradiction for the gnosis that knows the present time to know all the pasts and futures as well. For example, although the sprout at the time of [a specific] seed is not produced by that seed, it is not a contradiction for the seed to produce the sprout [in general].

c) How all the qualities cannot be expressed

⁶²⁸ MABh, *

⁶²⁹ Ibid., p.*

⁶³⁰ Ibid., p.*

⁶³¹ Candrakīrti, * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

With respect to all the qualities of the Buddhas, even if the Buddhas themselves were to transform their lifespan to countless eons and speak of these without engaging in any other enlightened activities if the qualities will not be exhausted, what need is there to speak of the bodhisattvas [being able to do so]? Therefore what need is say of the Self-Enlightened Ones and the Disciples will being able to know or express the qualities in their completeness? To indicate this by means of an analogy, the text reads:

**The birds will cease to fly because there are no skies;
They will do so when their strength comes to an end.
Likewise the Disciples and their likes as well as the bodhisattvas,
They will cease to speak of the space-like qualities of the Buddha.**

**Therefore can someone like me can ever
Know and express the qualities of yours?
Since these have been described by Noble Nagārjuna,
I have mentioned these in brief to help overcome doubts.**

For example, when [a bird] of wide wings capable of reaching to the other shore cruises the sky with the force of the winds, such a powerful bird is not going to stop [flying because there is no more skies or that it has ceased [to exist]; rather, as a result of flying and flying, at one point, as a result of having reached the end of its strength, it will stop. [475] Likewise, the Disciples and the Self-Enlightened Ones, as well as the children of the Buddhas abiding on the great levels, when they stop and speak no longer of the limitless qualities of the Buddhas, they do so not because the qualities are exhausted; rather, they do so because the power of their mind is lost. Given that the qualities of the Buddhas cannot be expressed in their completeness, how can someone like me, the author of this commentary, know or express these qualities? I cannot. Thus, although I do not possess the knowledge on my own to speak even a part of the qualities of the Buddha, that I have expressed these qualities a little by abandoning the doubts, that is without even the slightest hesitation, this is because these qualities have been described by Noble Nagārjuna; it is on this basis [I have explained them here].

d) The benefits of presenting two qualities

This is as follows.

**Emptiness is the “profound,”
While the other qualities are the “vast;”
Knowing the modes of the profound and the vast,
These qualities shall be obtained.**

In brief, of the two qualities of the Buddha presented in this treatise, namely the profound and the vast, the profound is the emptiness, namely the Buddha Body of Reality and the emptiness of the ground and the path. Other than these, such as the qualities of the eleven levels and powers and so on, which have been described, these constitute the vast

qualities. By understanding well the ways of such profound and the vast one will know these two points and practice them through which these two qualities of the Buddha will be attained.

iii. Presentation of the emanation body

Now to present the Body of Emanation from the point of view of being a means for attaining higher birth and the emergence of the aims and means common to the Disciples, Self-Enlightened and the bodhisattvas, as well as the emergence of many of the aims of the ordinary beings emerge, the text reads:

**Again you, who possess the unmoving body, descent to the three worlds;
Your emanations display the tranquil wheel of departing, birth and awakening;
In this way you shall compassionately guide to nirvāṇa all beings of the world
Who are ridden with devious conducts and are bound by numerous snares of expectations.**

Although you have already found the Truth Body, again you who possesses the body that does not waver from equipoise on suchness, [476] travel to the three realms of above, under and on the ground, through emanation bodies you display deeds of descending to the human world from Tuṣṭita, take birth, “and so on” includes associating with parents and son; you also display the deed of [turning] the wheel of dharma [helping others to] enter the tranquil awakening, which is the city of nirvāṇa, suitable to the mental faculties [of the trainees]. In this way, with great compassion you place all the world, that is all sentient beings who possess all diverse kinds of conducts and are caught in so many snares of expectations or craving, with no regard for fame, reward for kindness, and so on, to nirvāṇa. “With devious conducts” is how *Exposition of the Commentary* translates, while “with diverse conducts” is more in tune with of [Candrakīrti’s] commentary.

iv. Establishing the one vehicle

Thus, having explained the presentation of the three Buddha Bodies, to explain how the presentation of one vehicle in terms of three vehicles is intentional, the text reads:

**In that other than dispelling all the stains through the knowledge of reality
There is no other endeavor and that the reality of phenomena is not taught in terms of differentiated manifestations,
Since this wisdom that has reality as its object too does not exist as differentiated,
Therefore you taught the unequalled vehicle to the beings without discrimination.**

For the reasons that apart from understanding the suchness of phenomena there is no dispelling of all stains of the two obscurations that is emphasized or is the primary [pursuit], with respect to the suchness of phenomena too, no distinctions of different manifestations of suchness of phenomena, and with regard to the wisdom that is the subjective [experience] of suchness too, this does not exist in terms of different aspects of

cognizing its object, therefore you, Sage, taught for the trainees one indivisible vehicle that is unequal to all others. For example, we find the following:

Upali, if all phenomena are cognized as perfect equanimity one has transcended to nirvaṇa. This too is one; not two or three.⁶³²

The Noble [Nagārjuna] too states the following which is similar to *Entering the Middle Way*:

Since there is no differentiation in the ultimate expanse, [477]
You have no differentiations of vehicles;
The presentation of the vehicle in terms of three,
This is for the purpose of sentient beings to enter.⁶³³

Given that the cessation of all afflictions is not possible without realization of suchness and since there is no great differentiations within the suchness of phenomena, if one understands well how these [passages] reveal the presentation of differing causal vehicles to travel to nirvaṇa on the basis of realization or lack of realization of suchness and the presentation of some vehicles, such as the fruitions whereby one attains nirvaṇa that consists in mere cessation of the afflictions and one does not enter another vehicle were taught to help temporarily guide some trainees, one will understand the intention of those statements that describe the absence of realization of selflessness of phenomena in the Lesser Vehicle.

Now if there is only one nirvaṇa, which after having attained one does not need to enter another [vehicle], how is that it has been stated that through the vehicles of Disciples and Self-Enlightened Ones too one can transcend to nirvaṇa? To demonstrate how such statements are for an intended purpose, the text reads:

**Insofar as the dregs that engender misdeeds remain present in the beings,
So long the world will not enter the profound depth that is the sphere of Buddha's
experience;
You, Sugata, possess along with your wisdom and compassionate means
You've pledged "I shall help free the sentient beings."**

**Therefore, just as a wise [captain] conjures [images of] beautiful towns
To help relieve the frustration of people journeying to the land of precious gems,
You taught this vehicle to the Disciples to help connect their mind
To total pacification, while to those whose minds are trained in utter absence you
taught [the great vehicle] separately.**

Because the beings possess the causes that produces the faults, namely the great force of afflictions, such as the degenerate factors that make their body and mind unservicable – degenerate sentient beings, era, afflictions, views and lifespan – these undermine the

⁶³² 'od srung le'u? dkon brtsegs, * Kangyur, *

⁶³³ *?

extraordinary aspirations. And as they prevent generating interests in the Buddha's gnosis the world, that is the trainees, do not engage in the sphere of the Buddha's experience that is so difficult to fathom. [However] since you, the Sugatha, possess the knowledge skilled in the means of taming the trainees as well the compassionate skilful means never forgetting their welfare at the same time, [478] you must most definitely fulfill with all kinds of other skilful means what you have promised in the past during a bodhisattva time that I shall free all sentient beings.

In that there exist so many impediments for the beings to enter the great vehicle and in that the beings must be definitely lead to nirvaṇa as well, so just as stated in the *White Lotus [Sutra]*, when voyaging across the ocean to an island of precious gems a skilled captain, in order to help relieve the exhaustion of the hosts of people of the long voyage, until they reach the island of gems conjures the images of attractive cities. In the same manner, you the Blessed One you taught on this shore [opposite] to the great vehicle this [vehicle] as a means for attaining the great vehicle. In order to connect their mind to the bliss in the manner of total trainquility, you taught the two vehicles, namely that of the Disciples and, exemplified by this, that of the Self-Enlightened Ones. Then, to those who have trained their minds in the total absence of the afflictions of cyclic existence, separately, that is distinguishing these out, you taught the great vehicle alone. These, in turn, must complete the accumulations just as done by the Buddhas and attain, without doubt, the Buddhahood. As for the establishment of the oneness of vehicle, this should be understood on the basis of the statements, such as the followng, in the *Compendium of Sutras*, "That the vehicle is exhausted by one is taught in a multitude of sutras."⁶³⁴

v. Explanations of the time of manifest awakening and abiding

This has two parts:

- 1) Explanations pertaining to the time of manifest awakening
- 2) Explanations pertaining to the time of abiding [in that awakening]

The first is as follows.

**All the Sugatas that exist in all directions and in all Buddha fields,
The number of subtle particles that exist in all such [Buddha fields],
Such is the number of eons you depart to the most excellent, sublime awakening;
However this secret of yours is not to be divulged in words.**

In all the realms of the ten directions that are within the spheres of the Buddha, [479] however many numbers of atoms that exist in these Buddha fields, so too is the number of eons you, Sugatha, have departed to the supreme awakening. Though this is so, since it is difficult for those who have not gathered the roots of virtue in the past to be convinced [of this], this secret of yours is not to be spoken [to them]. For those who have extraordinary convictions, these have been explained here in order to help them gather immeasurable merits.

⁶³⁴ Nag>rjuna, *Sōtrasamucc>ya*, Toh * Tengyur, dbu ma, *

Here, the author of the *Explanation of the Commentary* states “This too is another Buddha Body of Truth and is therefore explained here; otherwise, other Buddhas will not come to emerge.”⁶³⁵ This is unacceptable because in the commentary it states that [the presentation here] is from the point of view of Buddha Body of Emanation.⁶³⁶ To assert that “the cause for the emergence of Buddha Body of Emanation” is meant for the Buddha Body of Truth too is untenable. For if the measure of departing into the Buddha Body of Truth is accepted is this much, the fault of there being no opportunity for others to attain Buddhahood too applies to this. [Furthermore] if the Buddha Body of Truth of all the Buddhas are one, the Truth Body of those that have not attained Buddhahood before and those that are to attain Buddhahood [in future] will already be attained. Such extreme contradictions will follow. Therefore [this passage] indicates the measure of departing to the essence of awakening; with respect to this too, it is not the temporal period of having attained Buddhahood in the past that is being presented. It is the measure of the number of displaying the deed of attaining Buddhahood in the form of Buddha Body of Emanation, after having attained Buddhahood, that is being presented. Therefore, the following which we read in Naktso’s translation is better:

In the realms that are the spheres of the Buddhas in all ten directions,
The number subtle particles that exist in all of these,
The awakening of you, the supreme Sugatha,
Shall emerge ...⁶³⁷ [480]

Otherwise, if one were to explain this as done so by *Explanation of the Commentary*, one will become an object to whom the root text states that this secret [of the Buddha’s qualities] should not be explained.

2) Explanations pertaining to the time of abiding [in that awakening]

This is as follows.

**For as long as the entire world arrives at the supreme state of tranquility,
And for as long as the space remains undestroyed, you, the conqueror,
Who has been produced by wisdom mother shall be nurtured by the wet nurse
Of compassion so how can there be for you [the entering into] utter tranquility?**

**The degree to which you feel compassion for the family of those who
Through their delusion consume worldly food contaminated with poison,
Such is not found in the pain of the mother whose child has consumed poison;
Therefore you, the Savior, do not depart to the state of total tranquility.**

Through unskilled mind clinging to entity and nonentity which engenders

⁶³⁵ ‘grel bshad, Tengyur, dbu ma, *

⁶³⁶ MABh, *

⁶³⁷ * Naktso*

**Sufferings of birth, death, enduring, separation from the loved and meeting with the unloved,
And evil-ridden beings are found, the world falls utterly under your compassion,
Because of compassion the Blessed One, your heart turns away from tranquility and
do not transcend to nirva°a.**

The future lifespan of the conqueror is until the entire world of trainees had travelled to the supreme state of total tranquility, that is until they attain Buddhahood, and until the unconditioned space comes to totally disintegrate. Given that the Buddhas act in the manner described above because of given birth to by the perfection of wisdom mother and nurtured by the wet nurse of great compassion, how can there exist the possibility for someone like you [to enter] the one-sided tranquility [of nirva°a]; no such possibility exists.

What is the compassion of the Buddhas that nurture these limitless sentient beings in order to bring about the welfare of all sentient beings like? Given that the world, due to the power of the delusion of grasping at true existence, the beings cling to the food of the five sense objects and consume them, thus becoming a cause for major suffering, the degree of compassion that arises in you for those family members, that is those who identify him as mine, of the person who has consumed [such] poison, to that degree not even pain arises in the heart of the mother of a only son who has consumed poison is in mortal danger. Therefore, the savior Buddhas will not depart to the supreme utterly tranquil state of one-sided [nirva°a].

For the reason why those unversed in suchness endowed with mind manifestly clinging to entities as true existence, because of their conviction in karma and its effects they view the existence of taking birth as celestial gods or as humans. Certainly they obtain the circumstances of arising and disintegration, namely the suffering of death; [481] they will also come to experience the sufferings engendered by separation from the loved and meeting with the unloved. While those who are ridden with the wrong view clinging to the things of cause and effect as being nonexistent, they will attain unfortunate births, such as the beings of the evil-minded like the hell realms, and the sufferings mentioned earlier. As these beings of the world come or fall entirely within the sphere of great compassion, with great compassion, you, the Blessed One, you turn away from the one-sided tranquility [of nirva°a]. Without possessing such one-sided tranquility, you shall remain in the world.

C. The mode in which the treatise was composed

This is as follows.

**This system has been explained
By the monk Candrakīrti on the basis of
Distillation from the treatise on the middle way,
Exactly in accordance with scriptures and oral instructions.**

**Just this teaching does not exist
Outside this [tradition of Nagṛjuna],
Likewise ascertain O learned ones
That the system evolved here does not exist elsewhere.**

This system of interpreting the intention of the savior Nagṛjuna without distortion has been uttered by the monk, the glorious Candrakīrti, on the basis of compilation from *Fundamental Wisdom*, the treatise on the middle way, and so on and in perfect accordance with the definitive scriptures as well as in perfect accordance with the instructions of the Noble Nagṛjuna. Just as other than this treatise on the middle way [of Nagṛjuna] this teaching known as emptiness is not found in other treatises, likewise, this system that emerges here too wherein some systems have been described with critical analysis, like the teaching on emptiness, this too does not exist in other treatises. This, I request the learned ones ascertain. Therefore, some Mādhyamikas who assert that what the Sautrantikas and Vaibhāṣika utter as ultimate reality these the Mādhyamikas accept as conventional truth, this they say so because they do not understand the suchness of the treatise on the middle way. [482] This is because it is illogical for a supramundane truth to be equivalent to a mundane truth. So states the commentary.⁶³⁸ This is because all those presentations on the conventional level that one accepts is posited on the basis of the absence of existence by means of self-defining characteristics. Therefore this is a system for which the tenets of the two proponents of real entities and so on, the presentations of which are made entirely on the basis of existence by virtue of self-defining characteristics, are rejected not only on the ultimate level but even on the nominal level as well. So [Candrakīrti] advises one to recognize that his is distinctive compared to the tradition of other Mādhyamikas with respect to interpreting the intention of savior Nagṛjuna and Āryadeva. Since the commentary of Buddhapaṇita is accepted as authoritative by this master as well, this is not a criticism of that [master]. The standpoint of bodhisattva / antideva too appears to be extremely consonant with the standpoint of this master [Candrakīrti].

In dependence on the presentation made of the two truths on the basis of there being no existence by virtue of self-defining characteristics there are numerous unique modes of explanation, such as the rejection of the tenets of autonomous syllogism and foundational consciousness, these as I have explained in detail in *Differentiation of the Definitive and the Interpretable* and others, I shall not speak of these here.⁶³⁹ Some assert that “supramundane” refers to the opponent’s position that transgresses [the boundaries of] worldly conventions while the “mundane” refers to one’s own standpoint. Since this [explanation] contradicts the commentary where it states “as you will have abandoned this supramundane truth,” one must take this to be the opposite. The meaning of mundaneness and its transcendence here is that of the standpoints of having realized or not realized suchness. [483]

Given that this system of explaining the intention of Noble Nagṛjuna is unique, those who fail to understand the intention of the Noble and fail to ascertain the truth of the

⁶³⁸ * Provide the full text of MABh here. MABh, *

⁶³⁹ * TSK, *

scriptures and are terrified of even the letters that reveal emptiness, because they have abandoned this supramundane truth, to present the truth of the meaning of the treatise on the middle way without distortion, therefore, this *Entering the Middle Way* has been composed. To indicate this, the text reads:

**Those terrified of the color of utterly vast ocean of Nagṛjuna's wisdom ocean,
They [may] cast away this excellent system to a distance, nonetheless
With the water opening the petals of white water lily of *The Stanzas* [on the Middle Way],
Today it fulfill all the yearnings of Candrakīrti.**

Terrified of the dark color so utterly difficult fathom of the extremely vast ocean of the wisdom of Noble Nagṛjuna realizing the profound [emptiness], people such as those who propound the Mind Only, they cast away this excellent system of Nagṛjuna to a distance. Though this is so, with the water opening the petals of the white water lily of the stanzas on the middle way, with the water opening the petals of white water lilies, namely *The Stanzas on the Middle Way*, today they fulfill the yearnings in the heart of Candrakīrti, the one who is opening the petals of the white water lily.

If this is so, did the elder Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmapala and so on, authors of treatises who have already appeared in the past, did these too, terrified of merely hearing the letters, thoroughly abandoned this undistorted teaching of the meaning of the dependent origination? Yes, I would say so.⁶⁴⁰

With respect to this statement [of Candrakīrti], although in the undisputed treatises of Vasubandhu and Dignaga [scriptures] are interpreted in accordance with the Vijñaptimātra standpoint, as to what exactly is the [personal] positions of these masters, it will be extremely difficult for someone like us to [fully] discern. Who then shall realize this profound truth? The text reads:

**The reality most profound that has been explained which is terrifying, which,
through past habituation,
People will come to realize, this others will not comprehend though their learning
may be vast;
Therefore seeing the modes of being created by their own mind, like the
propositions on the self,
Forsake admiration for other treatises and systems which are other than this.**

This profound truth of suchness so terrifying that has been explained earlier, one sees that it will be definitely realized by those individuals who are habituated in the past in other lifetimes to the propensities of extraordinary admiration for emptiness. [484] Here in Naktsō's translation reads "Even with regard to those who view the inferior non-Buddhist

⁶⁴⁰ MABh, *

treatises as truthful too, one sees them realize emptiness through the power of the causes.”⁶⁴¹ This appears to be better than Patsap’s translation.

Just as [the upholders of] the non-Buddhist schools in whose mind the propensities of extraordinary admiration for emptiness has not entered, although they abandon temporarily the manifest levels of the afflictions of the three realms as described in the Abhidharma [texts], despite the fact these masters possess vast learning of having studied many scriptures, they shall not comprehend this profound truth [of emptiness]. Therefore, since the mode of presentation of the ultimate truth that is other than the system of the Middle Way do not arrive at the Buddha’s enlightened intention, just as one would relate to the treatises that elucidate the selfhood of persons on the basis of seeing or viewing constructs created by one’s own mind, one should forsake admiration for those other treatises and systems different from this tradition of the middle way. One should not feel wondrous at the other systems which are constructs of their mind; instead, one should feel a sense of wonder at one’s own extraordinary admiration in the view of emptiness.

D. Dedicating the virtues of having composed the treatise

This is as follows.

**May the merits of speaking on the excellent tradition of master Nagrjuna pervade
to the edges of space,
And shine bright as the autumn stars at in the midst of the mind’s sky darkened
by hosts of afflictions;
Through the force of having obtained this that resembles a jewel on serpent’s hood,
May the entire world realize reality and swiftly travel to the Sugata’s level.**

The vast merits reaching to the edges of all directions I may have gathered from speaking of or explaining most clearly the excellent system of the great master Noble Nagrjuna through scriptures and hosts of reasoning, [485] through the strength of this which resembles like an extremely bright star at the center of a sky turned indigo or darkened by hosts of afflictions, or like a jewel crowing the hood of a serpent that is the author’s mind, may the entire world of sentient beings realize suchness exactly as it is and swiftly traverse the Sugata’s level known as “Eternal Light.” In Naktso’s translation reads “Through the merits obtained from speaking the beautiful system of Nagrjuna renown in all directions, ...”

IV. The concluding matter.

This has two parts:

- A. Which master composed [this work]
- B. Which translators and Indian pañitas undertook the translation

⁶⁴¹ This is a comparison of the translation of a sentence in Naktso and Patsap’s versions of relevant section of Candrakīrti’s autocommentary.

The first is as follows.

This completes *Entering the Middle Way*, which illuminates the way of the profound and the vast, composed by master Candrakīrti whose mind is immersed in the supreme vehicle, who is endowed with unchallengable wisdom and compassion, who, by milking a drawing of a cow, undoes clinging to true existence.

This completes *Entering the Middle Way* illuminating the ways of the profound and the vast of Nāgārjuna's system, which was composed by the great master, the glorious Candrakīrti, who was born in the land of Maṇḍara, the upholder of knowledge known to have found the illusion-like meditative absorption, whose mind is utterly absorbed in the supreme unexcelled vehicle, who possesses wisdom and compassion unchallengable by forces of adversity, who, by milking a drawing of a cow, help cease the sentient beings' clinging to true existence.

B. Which translator and Indian paṇḍitas undertook the translation

It was at the monastery of Ratnagupta, at the center of the town Ānupama in the region of Kaśmīra, during the reign of the Kaśmīra king /rīman Āryadeva that the Indian abbot Tilakakala and the Tibetan translator Patsap Nyima Drak undertook this translation in accordance with the Kaśmīra redaction of the text. Later, at Ramoché [temple] in Rasa [Lhasa] the Indian abbot Kanakavarma and the same [Tibetan] translator, on the basis of comparison against the eastern Aparānta redaction of the text, excellently edited it and finalized through teaching and study.

Citing the colophon and the translator's colophon collectively on the basis of the commentary here is done so because the translation of the root text undertaken independently and the one in the commentary were both compared and edited here.

The supreme essence of the all the scriptures of the conquerors,
This profound middle way, the path of dependent origination free of extremes,
It's excellent Noble Nāgārjuna who was prophesized to reveal this,
Free of the two extremes and just as it is.

Although there exist numerous traditions of learned ones
Interpreting his sublime system and the thought of Āryadeva,
It's the tradition of Buddhapaṇḍita and Candrakīrti
And that of /antideva that expounds this in its completeness.

By combining into one the avenues of the thought of
These three accomplished masters and by explaining well
The essential points with decisive analyses penetrating the words,
I have made this supreme Prasaṅgika tradition stainless.

In this northern country even those who admire this system,
They do not engage with the extremely subtle path of reasoning;

Those who are weak in their fortune with respect to the profound truth,
Because of their own failure to understand they disparage it;

Seeing so many of these and to help remove such stains,
To help elucidate this profound path to some who are fortunate,
And in order that I too become never divorced from this excellent path
Throughout all my lives I have striven in this [endeavor].

Through the virtue emerging from striving in this labor,
May all beings realize all the essential points of the profound truth,
And through their dedication in the practices day and night,
May they please the Buddhas and their children at all times.

This extensive exposition of *Entering the Middle Way* entitled *Clear Elucidation of the Thought* was composed by the yogi of the great middle way, Lobsang Drkpaï Pal, a monk of vast learning. It was written at the strong urging of the spiritual mentor Lekpa Pal of Lhu, one versed in the ten treatises, [487] who offered a maññala of forty *ngulsang* silver coins as well as in response to solicitation from many spiritual mentors who deeply admire this teaching and possess no small capacity of intellect to comprehend its meaning, who emphatically urged me to write [an exposition] that is comprehensive in its explanation of the difficult points of [Candrakīrti's] commentary, which is lucid in its explanation of the meaning of the words as well detailed in its decisive analysis of the general points. It was composed at the great mountain retreat of victorious Geden.